Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire

Capital Improvement Program Committee (CIPC)

Meeting Minutes – October 23, 2025

Fire Station #2 Conference Room,

620 Old Homestead Highway

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, Selectmen's Representative James Tempesta, and Planning Board Representative Michael York.

Others present: Recording Secretary Beverly Bernard, Town Planner Adam Paquette, Assistant Town Planner Stephon Mehu, and Town Administrator Lori Rautiola. Representing the Golden Rod Grange were members of the Preservation Society: Lillian Chirichella, Eileen Longe, Robert Kenney and Jane Johnson. Also present were Recreation Director Ashlee Crosby, Fire Chief Eric Mattson, Mark Scalera, and Jessica Sanchez.

Absent: Larry Crowder and Pat Ambrosio

MINUTES

York **motioned** to accept the minutes from October 16, 2025. Second made by Tempesta with no further discussion. All were in favor, **motion passed.**

CURRENT BUSINESS

Recreation

Crosby talked about using Nettie Stone funds. Bittel pointed out that the funds can only be used for the pavilion. $15,000 is total budgeted. $8,500 is in Nettie fund, Crosby said she would like to use $6,200 for the pavilion and she asked to use a portion of the $15,000 for removal of brush which harbors bees. Crosby also noted a need for a dock for campers and asked it to be added to the capital budget. $5,000 is needed for 2026. Bohannon asked about bees and asked if any work there might be done by Town staff. Crosby said she had spoken to Department of Public Works Director Joe DiRusso, but he said that was a bigger project than his team would handle. Bittel asked about possible use of insurance for the trees that came down during a storm. It was noted that no building was impacted so insurance would not be involved. Bittel added $5,000 for a dock and said that Crosby had sufficient funds to do her projects.

Engine 2 Replacement

Mattson had two quotes for replacement of fire engine 2: $715,999 and $714,635. Bittel asked about customization. Mattson said $800,000 would cover customization in addition to the truck. Bittel spoke about combo trucks which include rescue capability, and which would eliminate the need for the additional heavy rescue truck. It would be a good use of manpower and equipment. He asked for budgeting for combo use. That includes a crew cab. Mattson said the department would be okay with that. $775,000 was decided to budget for the line item. Bittel asked if Mattson asked about looking at the used fire truck market. Mattson said there are some available, but it is a tight market. Tempesta asked what happens to the existing fire truck once the Town has a new one to replace it. Mattson said it is sold to other communities.

Bittel asked about a commercial cab. Mattson said it would cost $100,000 less for a commercial cab but you lose space for storage and if we are going to also use the truck for rescue, storage is premium. Bittel also asked about the possibility of grants available. Bittel said we have gotten grants in the past. Any help lowers the bond. Mehu said he would look into grants. Mattson and Mehu said they would work on it.

Stratton Free Library – Masonry
Bittel said $25-30,000 was estimated as a cost for doing the chimney work. However, it was reported that a second vendor said they didn't think the chimney needed all that work. There will be a meeting of concerned parties and hopefully the numbers will come down. Tempesta noted $5,000 is currently in the line item.

Mt. Caesar Union Library
Bittel said the library is looking at a one for four match – they need a year to prepare.

Sewers – Summary of Position
West sewers – it is too soon to do much about. North sewer was discussed. Pumps are estimated $50-75,000 for rebuilding, but the $300,000 reserve is more than enough.

Brown Field
Mehu said he is trying to get the number to $150,000 for the project. Bittel asked should we budget now or put it out until a staged-in plan can be determined. Bohannon asked Mehu to come up with a proposal. Mehu said we aren't ready for a proposal, except for engineering. Mehu said his opinion is that we should not continue with the firm who provided the initial proposal. Bohannon said Mehu could still come back with a more staged/phased plan. It was decided to re-work the idea of updating Brown Field.

Town Hall
Rautiola said there will be quotes coming for both inside and outside stairways to connect upper Town Hall to a future lower Town Hall. Boosting the capital reserve would be a start for renovating the former fire station in the basement. Bonding was discussed. Bittel said in the past there has been a warrant Article to appropriate funds in case a bond article failed, citing the recent fire station articles.

And when the bond issue failed each time, money was built up such there was $500,000 available. This allows some flexibility in planning. There would be a bond Warrant Article for renovations to Town Hall, and an additional Article would ask for substantial capital reserves, which would not pass if the bond Warrant Article passed. There was general agreement for this course of action.

It was noted that the new Fire Station should be able to be moved into by Thanksgiving. This will allow for some work to begin with future lower Town Hall.

Grange – Discussion of Direction – New Hampshire Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP)

Bittel said there is to be someone who did previous architectural work looking at the building. DiRusso will be in attendance. He noted a study is required for LCHIP funding. Chirichella said NH Preservation Alliance recognized the Grange as worthy of preserving. There was a discussion about the study qualifying for an LCHIP grant. Bittel noted that foundation needs to be evaluated by the Town, not by the CIPC. Chirichella spoke about the Grange as a possible annex to Town Hall. She talked about doing renovations in phases. Bittel noted LCHIP require a 50% match. For the Town to do it, it would have to be known as to when the match would be required from the Town. Bittel asked the Preservation Society to return to CIPC with more information about possible other grant sources.

Incremental Revenue Study

Bittel stressed the importance of this study. Rautiola said the problem is that staff is very busy and the study would take significant amount of time. Bohannon suggested Southwest Region Planning Commission (SWRPC) might be able to help. Paquette said he is struggling with budgeting for this study. Bittel said he didn't think it is that complicated. He said a modest gathering of information for selected new construction such as property tax growth over the past three years and projected into future three years would be a good starting point. He said if we looked at growth figures, the Town would be better off financially. Impact fees were also discussed.

Next: No meeting next week. Meet the following week on Thursday Nov. 6th at 11 am.

ADJOURNMENT

Bohannon **motioned** to adjourn, and York seconded the motion without further discussion. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 12:10 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary

DRAFT