Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire

Capital Improvement Program Committee (CIPC)

Meeting Minutes – September 22, 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 takes place at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board.

CALL TO ORDER

CIPC was called to order by Chair Steven Bittel at 10:30 am.

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

Others present: Town Administrator Lori Rautiola, Town Planner Adam Paquette, Assistant Town Planner Stephon Mehu.

Absent: None

MINUTES

Bittel makes a motion to accept the minutes from November 20, 2024 . Second made by Bohannon with no further discussion. All were in favor, motion passed.

OFFICER NOMINATIONS

York makes motion nominating Bittel as CIPC Chair. Second made by Bohannon with no further discussion. All were in favor, motion passed.

Bittel makes a motion nominating Bohannon as CIPC Vice Chair. Second made by York with no further discussion. All were in favor, motion passed.

CURRENT BUSINESS

- Bittel starts to discuss the current draft of Capital Funding Summary and Detail Schedules.
- Bittel highlights two items, roads and town hall. He mentions moving Marcy Hill forward by one year. Bittel is not in favor of increasing the road rehab budget this year.
- Bittel noted that the Grange's foundation must be addressed before any other work. An engineering study recommends a full rebuild. DiRusso plans to visit with structural engineer or contractor by the end of the month. If repairs are feasible at a reasonable cost, they'll proceed; if costs exceed $100,000, additional resources will be needed. Bittel wants firm numbers before deciding the building's future.
- York asked if demolishing and rebuilding would be more cost-effective. Tempesta noted the roof has already been rebuilt, but Bittel cautioned that sunk costs shouldn't dictate further investment.

- Bohannon asks for clarity on last year's deliberative session. The group discusses issues with the Grange financing.
- Bittel raised Town Hall improvements, focusing on basement access. Drawings are in, and DiRusso will have cost estimates by Dec. 1. Bittel capped the budget at $150,000, with other remodels planned for 2027. He suggested an exterior staircase to save space; Rautiola supported this for its minimal disruption but added it was a bit pre-mature.
- The Board discusses DPW and space for recreation staff briefly.
- Bittel discusses sewers. West Swanzey Water Treatment Plant is slowly going out of date/spec. Two options were presented: Rebuild the treatment plant for more compliance and capacity or hook up with Keene Sewer north along Route 12.
- Crowder states that sending West Swanzey water to Keene would restrict what we could build in North Swanzey due to capacity constraints. Pumping to Keene would be very expensive. Crowder asks the board to consider future ramifications of pumping sewer to Keene.
- York brings up the water concerns in West Swanzey. Mentions future considerations for educating the public about the issues West Swanzey is facing.
- Crowder explains that there's no current place to put the water because the plant is at capacity.
- Bittel discusses Swanzey Lake Dam. Engineering study is funded. Will not be as costly as upper Wilson Pond dam. He considered this a must-do item.
- Bittel discusses rail trails. Bohannon doesn't know of any grants besides what we're already working with. Mehu confirms the town is doing the work involved with repairs. Funds are coming out of a grant with the state. The cost is roughly $10k per year for maintenance. Road crossings were funded through a grant. The Town has received funds, they just need to order materials.
- Crowder directs the group to discuss road rehab reconstruction. He suggests moving Marcy Hill to 2027 because Sugar Hill has a greater need than Marcy Hill. Marcy Hills' estimate might end up being higher than anticipated. Reshuffling the road repairs will be discussed with DiRusso.
- Bittel mentions the Fire Station is about 500,000 under budget. Good report to bring back to the Town of Swanzey. Hope to move the fire trucks by Thanksgiving.
- The Board discusses when to meet with department heads. The Board determines that next Monday, September 29 at 10 am, they will meet with:
    - Fire
    - Police
    - Both Libraries
- On October 6, the Board would like to meet with Recreation and Recycling.
- The Board discusses Cutler School briefly.
- The Board discusses Brown Field and grant issues, compliance issues, etc.
- The Board discusses water and sewer troubles in West Swanzey.

- York discusses the Governance Committee briefly.
- Bittel requested a 6-year incremental tax study (past 3 years, next 3 years), calling it essential for public education and noting school impacts may be overstated and should be quantified. Mehu agrees to take on the task.

ADJOURNMENT

York motions to adjourn and Bohannon seconds without further discussion. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 11:32 am.

Respectfully Submitted, Adam Paquette, Town Planner.

DRAFT