Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Conservation Commission Meeting
Whitcomb Hall, Main Street, Swanzey, NH
Meeting Minutes—February 2, 2026

Note: Minutes are subject to review, correction, and approval by the Commission. Review, correction, and approval of minutes generally occur at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Swanzey Conservation Commission was called to order by Chair Cheri Domina at 4:00 p.m. Committee members present: Chair Domina, Jay Ward, Bonnie Hart, Bob Goodrich, Nancy Karlson and Bud Winsor.
Also present: Stephon Mehu, Assistant Town Planner; Roberta Visser

Absent: Mark Scalera, alternate Jane Johnson.

MINUTES

The commission members considered the meeting minutes for January 5, 2025. **Motion by Karlson to approve the Minutes. There was a second to the motion by Winsor and no further discussion. All were in favor. *Motion passed.***

NEW BUSINESS

Public input—Roberta Visser said she's considering being an alternate on the commission.

Commission membership—Domina requested that members let her know if they are considering ending their terms. Three-year terms for Domina, Winsor and Karlson are ending in March—they need to re-apply. Web page needs updating. Ward said he'd try to remain onboard if he gets elected Selectman.

Review for Planning Board / ZBA / Town

ZBA—Special Exception, large accessory structure, 100 Holbrook Ave. No wetlands involved, no business usage—just an oversize garage for vehicle storage, Mehu said. Commission had no comment.

OLD BUSINESS

Open Space Planning

Edits to Plan Goals—Discussed Domina's edits. Concerns about topsoil stripping—how do other towns prevent this? Domina also mentioned archeological sites—can we protect these without pinpointing? Made a few additions; Domina will get the new version to Jeff Littleton.

Invoice—Ward made a motion to approve Moosewood's 1/26/26 invoice, Open Space Conservation Plan #1, for $7050. Winsor seconded. No discussion; all in favor. Motion passed.
Domina will ask for a year-end Financial report, and also look at how much we've spent with Moosewood on this project thus far.

Conservation Lands Map—Mehu brought a list of town properties, and he, Ward and Domina went over it before the meeting today and noted larger properties worth including on the map as potential conservation lands. Discussed. Will get these to Jeff for inclusion; some are already on the map.

Wetland Conservation District amendments—Deliberative Session is Feb. 3. Ward said there would be time this year to discuss ordinance changes. Domina said she would go and be prepared to answer questions.

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College Scholarships—applications are due by the April meeting. Domina will advertise.

Mt. Cresson Trails—Snow too deep for site visit and lot unplowed. Will table till conditions improve. Talk to Mike Kowalczyk about connecting to rail trail.

Swanzey Lake/Wilson Pond News—Winsor said that Cathy Bergstrom is working with Mehu on language for improving septic systems, and has talked to Selectmen about a potential ordinance (model from Northwood, NH). Not as many aerators on docks this year. Ice is thick. Winsor said the watershed study renewed interest in the health of the lake; Ward wants the town to apply to have a watershed study done on Wilson Pond too. Town planner helped us get the last one; could SWRPC staff assist?

OTHER BUSINESS

2026 Workplan—With SWRPC reviewing Swanzey's zoning ordinance, would this be a good time to re-visit the Groundwater Ordinance? Hart said she's researching how other towns protect against large companies (datacenters, bottling companies) drawing down their aquifers. Discussed what happened in 2018—Visser worked on it and explained why the Planning Board didn't want to approve it then. Now people are interested in protecting the W. Swanzey Water Co.; wouldn't be a big leap to protect the aquifer.

Ideas so far…

- Groundwater ordinance
- Mt. Cresson walk/trail completion/kiosk & map
- Checklist for Conditional Use review
- Town-owned Conservation Lands visits
- Rolling out our Open Space Plan – public meetings
- Public programs—Winsor said he'd look into the Doug Tallamy Restoring Insects film for this winter.
- Plant swap – State nursery
- Town-wide trail map & signs

Next Meeting: March 2

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Karlson to adjourn, second by Winsor, without further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.*** Adjournment occurred at 5:35 pm.

Respectfully Submitted, Cheri Domina, Chair

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