Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Conservation Commission Meeting
Whitcomb Hall, Main Street, Swanzey, NH
Meeting Minutes—November 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 Cheri Domina, Vice Chair Bud Winsor, Jay Ward, Bob Goodrich, Mark Scalera, Bonnie Hart, Nancy Karlson. Others present: Asst. Town Planner Stephon Mehu

Absent: Alternate Jane Johnson.

MINUTES

The commission members considered the meeting minutes for October 5, 2025. **Ward makes a motion to accept minutes. Scalera seconded. All were in favor. Winsor abstained. Motion passed.**

NEW BUSINESS

Review for Planning Board / ZBA / Town

I. ZBA—Special Exception, garage, 106 Whitcomb Rd. – no comments
II. ZBA—Special Exception, garage, 25 Westbrook Ct. – no comments
III. ZBA—Special Exception, Atlantic Tower, 16 Fox Run Rd. – Discussed concerns about the access road going through wetlands. Is it an existing road? A trail? Domina will talk to Adam Paquette about whether this project will require a conditional use permit. A site visit may be necessary. No concerns about the Special Exception.

OLD BUSINESS

Open Space Plan Update— Domina spoke with Jeff Littleton by phone today about our prior comments. Most pressing were the changes to how conserved lands were acknowledged in the report. Winsor would like a distinction between lands that are conserved in perpetuity versus those that are not; Domina agreed. Littleton had made some adjustments, but board members discussed if those changes were clear enough. Domina asked Littleton if the Yale Forest and other "conservation lands" that are not permanently conserved can be colored differently on the Focus Areas map. Additionally, the Swanzey Lake Watershed needed to be added as a conservation focus area. Domina suggested some other changes that members agreed to. Littleton will attend the December meeting. There is a tentative plan to have a public meeting in January or February.

An invoice for $1,000.00 was billed from Moosewood Ecological for the Open Space Plan report, dated 10/25/26. Ward motions to approve payment. Scalera seconded. No further discussion. All in favor. None opposed. Motion Passed.

Finance Reporting— Domina received an email from the new town finance director, Andre Jaegar. They will schedule a meeting to discuss finance and procedures. Domina had requested that a prior payment be corrected as the funds were taken from the wrong Conservation Commission account. It sounds like the town is behind in transferring funds. Members agree that a standard operating procedure is needed for requesting funds and payments.

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Honey Hill & Mt. Cresson Monitoring— Mehu and Ward surveyed Mt. Cresson. No findings to report. Domina and Hart surveyed Honey Hill. There were no findings at the time, but there was evidence of several fires over the summer; this was a concern of the landowner. Discussion over whether a sign is needed to deter the fires. Additionally the bench needs to be replaced at the summit. Domina and Ward will submit reports.

Wilson Pond—Scalera read comments, re: our questions, from Water and Wetlands, the company who would treat the pond for bladderwort. They said that there are no downstream effects from herbicide treatment. They would monitor changes to dissolved oxygen levels created from decaying plant material. Further decisions need to be made about cost and treatment levels, and additional information is still needed. Domina submitted a question about herbicide treatment to the NH Conservation Comm Listserv, and sent the answers on to Ward and Scalera. Domina said one person talked about invasives taking over in areas where water lilies and other native vegetation was eliminated. Amanda McQuaid from UNH Extension offered to discuss further with us. Can we find out more about what caused the overgrowth? Scalera said the pond had been regularly drained and dredged in the past, which cut down on plant life. The Wilson Pond committee will meet on the 10th to discuss further. A biologist from DES plans to visit the pond next year to do water monitoring.

Ward says Selectmen agreed to create a fund for Wilson Pond. It would be managed by the town and funding would be through donation only. Details of how the fund is to be managed are to be determined.

Swanzey Lake—There were some complaints from citizens that draw down was too early this year. DPW's Joe DiRusso produced a document to assure that it was done properly on the 4th. Scalera says we need a firm yearly date to reduce confusion at both lakes; agreed that April 15 and October 15 would be good. Winsor is still looking for additional funding for the On-Call Engineering Study for Talbot Hill Road; JB Mack from SWRPC wants to meet with town officials. Disagreement on whether the Selectboard signed a letter of support due to the lack of specific funding amount. DiRusso needs further clarification on his legal capacity to work on the intersection with a class 6 road. Mehu will inquire about the intersection issue.

Mehu says the Selectboard also approved the latest addition of a septic ordinance for watershed landowners with minor adjustments included notifying affected property owners. Mehu is still determining which properties will be affected. Joe Parisi, Chair of the Lake Assoc., has reported that beavers are becoming an issue. There is some damming near the outlet; may get a trapper. Mehu reports that Richardson Park Pavillion has a new roof and the deck is being worked on. The shoreland permit was submitted and approved for work addressing surface water management issues, including drainage from the parking lot.

Next Meeting—December 7

ADJOURNMENT
Domina makes a motion to adjourn. Ward seconded. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted, Bonnie Hart & Cheri Domina, Chair

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