Swanzey Energy Commission – Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, August 10, 2026
Time: 1:00 p.m.
Location: Whitcomb Hall

1. Call to Order

Chairman Bob Audette called the meeting to order at 1:09 p.m.

2. Attendance

Present:

- Bob Audette, Chair
- Barbara Skuly, Vice-Chair
- Steven Russell, Member
- Alan Gross, Selectmen's Representative
- Stephon Mehru, Assistant Planner

Absent:

- Cheri Domina

3. Minutes

Members reviewed the previous minutes. Barbara clarified she should not be listed as responsible for exploring the Clean Energy item with Stefan. Members praised Cheri's consistently excellent minutes.

- **Motion:** Approve minutes as amended.
- **Made by:** Steven Russell
- **Seconded by:** Barbara Skuly
- **Vote:** Unanimous approval

4. Correspondence

Bob and members discussed correspondence from Clean Energy New Hampshire (CENH) regarding annual municipal dues.

- Standard municipal membership remains $300.
- Funds are already budgeted; Selectboard approval is not required.
- CENH asked whether Swanzey wished to upgrade to "Gold"; members agreed the standard membership is sufficient.
- Conference attendance (Nov. 12) was discussed; upgrading was deemed unnecessary.
- Steven noted he serves on CENH's Drive Electric Policy Committee.
- **Motion:** Renew Swanzey's standard municipal membership with CENH for $300.

- **Made by:** Barbara Skuly
- **Seconded by:** Steven Russell
- **Vote:** Unanimous approval

5. Community Power Update

Members discussed whether residents have received the promised opt-in postcards from the town's provider.

- Bob is not enrolled in Community Power but expected to receive an opt-in notice and did not.
- Some residents reported receiving notices via Facebook.
- Members expressed concern that the provider may not have followed through on its communication plan.
- Barbara agreed to contact the provider to clarify the status of opt-in notifications.
- Members discussed how residents can be better informed, including through Facebook or Swanzey Uncovered.

6. Weatherization Update

Bob presented a detailed research summary on potential grant stacking for weatherization projects at Whitcomb Hall, Stratton Free Library, and the Carpenter Home / Honeybee Hollow Daycare.

- Eversource incentives cover ~45–50% of costs; remaining funds must be matched.
- Multiple grant avenues exist, including NH DOE, CDFA/CDBG, LCHIP, Moose Plate, USDA Rural Development, NH Charitable Foundation, and MEDC.
- CDBG eligibility for the Carpenter Home is complicated because the daycare does not own the building.
- Members agreed the facility should be treated as a regional childcare resource.
- Whitcomb Hall trust funds were discussed; members agreed to pursue grants first.
- Historic-preservation constraints may affect insulation methods at Whitcomb Hall and Stratton Library.

7. Solar Ordinance Update

Members briefly acknowledged that the Planning Board has a sample solar ordinance on its agenda.

8. Solar Survey / Swanzey Uncovered

Members discussed delays in publication of Swanzey Uncovered. Barbara will ask Katie about the status. Bob offered to assist with content creation.

9. Public Comment

No public comment.

10. Next Meeting

Monday, September 14, 2026 – Whitcomb Hall

11. RECs Update

The Commission held a comprehensive discussion with standard power representatives regarding the acquisition of Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) under the newly developed Community Power Plan.

- **Local REC Capture Strategy:** The committee noted the importance of monitoring local solar projects to ensure their REC attributes are captured and bought locally, keeping environmental benefits within Swanzey.
- **Meter Infrastructure:** Representatives noted their parent firm has added certified meter-reading personnel specifically to address regional gaps in tracking and verifying RECs.
- **3-MW Commercial Project Interplay:** Members assessed a proposed 3-megawatt solar development in town. The consultant noted the project generates significant RECs but cannot utilize traditional net metering due to state law cap limits on projects exceeding 1 megawatt. Its viability depends on the community power framework acting as a long-term Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) off-taker.

12. Grant Information / CDS Update

Members discussed preparing for the next Congressional Directed Spending cycle. Stefan will provide a bullet list of project needs.

13. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.