Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire

Water and Sewer Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes – May 21, 2026
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 take place at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Scott Self at 10:00 am at Whitcomb Hall.

Members present: Also present were Committee members Steven Bittel, Scott Self, Stacey Goodale, Cathy Bergstrom, Ken Greatbatch, Pat Ambrosio. Also present was Selectman Jim Tempesta.

Absent: Sylvester Karasinski, Larry Crowder, and Selectman Bill Hutwelker

Others present: Recording Secretary Beverly Bernard, and Department of Public Works (DPW) Director Joe DiRusso. Also present were City of Keene Public Works Department Director Donald Lussier and Assistant Public Works Director Aaron Costa.

MINUTES

Bittel **moved** to approve the minutes from May 7, 2026. Second made by Ambrosio with no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

DISCUSSION WITH CITY OF KEENE Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) STAFF

There was discussion about the existing agreement with the City of Keene and Lussier noted that the City of Keene is submitting an updated application with the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES). He said that after testing there will be upload information that will impact on the existing agreement. There was a brief discussion about North Swanzey residential flow. Bittel spoke about grants available for commercial business. Lussier said they have run an analysis on gravity infrastructure which won't accommodate a lot of extra flow. DiRusso spoke about a way to not overburden the system and Lussier said they could take current flow. Lussier said he has conservative estimates, and DiRusso said we probably wouldn't come close to those flow numbers. Costa said his data is from 2004. They spoke about a 30" main. Lussier said Swanzey will have to cover 4 miles and lift the flow. DiRusso said we need to provide two different stations for pumping flow to satisfy NHDES. Lussier asked about timing for interconnect. Bittle noted a study should be done during the summer. He said this is a possible three-year project with a 2027 town vote. Lussier said that sounds optimistic. Lussier said that with construction in three years that will be before the Winchester Street project, which will also take three years, and which could hold up this project to connect Swanzey. DiRusso said NHDES is very interested in helping with the funding for this project. Lussier said we work on updating the municipal agreement first before any construction is planned. Lussier said he will speak to the City Manager about the discussion with Swanzey to give them time to think it through. Self asked about flow going through North Swanzey and Lussier agreed. He noted a bypass to do work on the station. Self asked about using some of the data from West Swanzey. Costa and Lussier agreed.

The City of Keene folks were thanked for their time, and they left the meeting at 10:30 am.

DISCUSSION ON FLAT FEE SEWER RATES

There was a discussion about $0.01 per gallon possible fee. Self noted a letter that explains the need for changes to the fees. Letter would go out to water users and there would be a meeting for the public for open discussion. DiRusso spoke about the cost of meters, which is very low and not an important factor. Self spoke about the way apartment houses were rated in the past. Bittel said we need to do a survey to find out what is out there. He said billing is converted to cubic square feet of wastewater flow. He said he and Self would get together to discuss further. Self said the idea of an $85 per unit rate increase comes within the $0.01 per gallon rate. There was a discussion about number of bedrooms having an impact on wastewater flow. There was a discussion about putting in meters in large apartment buildings. DiRusso said he was going to communicate with apartment managers to see what kind of response he gets. Self read the proposed letter about the need for updating the system and need for a rate increase. Tempesta suggested an additional comment in the letter that a follow-up meeting will be held so that questions will be answered. That addition to the letter was agreed upon by all present.

DISCUSSION REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) FOR ENGINEERING SERVICES

The members discussed the possibility of staying with Underwood Engineering. DiRusso said he has learned about the expertise Underwood has from the past and it makes sense to stay with them. Self conducted a vote among the members, and it was unanimous to contract Underwood to get a proposal for further engineering for next phase of connection to City of Keene. DiRusso will produce the RFP and ask for response before the September vote.

DISCUSSION ON METER REQUIREMENTS: WHO INSTALL METERS, WHO PAYS FOR THEM

Self spoke about financing on pump station; design and estimates need to be done quickly said DiRusso and he noted the Town has funds for that.

GRANT SEARCH UPDATE

Self noted that a meeting was held with Southwest Region Planning Commission (Todd Warner) about grant opportunities. Economic Development from federal sources grants are available. And Self noted Northern Borders funding available. There was general discussion about funding sources and limitations involved with some of the grants. Self noted the Town has some funds so as not to be held back with making progress on plans.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business

NEXT MEETING: 10 am June 11th

ADJOURNMENT

Goodale **moved** to adjourn, and Tempesta seconded the motion without further discussion. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 11:00 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary

DRAFT