Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire

Water and Sewer Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes – July 9, 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, Ken Greatbatch, Pat Ambrosio, Larry Crowder, Sylvester Karasinski, and Department of Public Works (DPW) Director Joe DiRusso.

Absent: Cathy Bergstrom

MINUTES

Bittel **moved** to approve the minutes from June 18, 2026. Second made by DiRusso with no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

Update from engineering sub committee
DiRusso said he has worked with New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (DES) and the engineering contract has been signed off and we will be moving forward. He said given the process that was followed the Town will likely be reimbursed. He noted the end of year, possibly November, for work to be complete. He noted this will not be the complete design. It will be two years before shovel is in the ground. Bittle noted that will be March 2029. Self noted the engineers at City of Keene are targeting 2030. DiRusso said the City of Keene sewer plant folks believe they can handle the additional flow. There was a discussion about State rights-of-ways and other possible routes. Easements may be necessary and they take time to acquire.

Update from Rate Adjustment sub committee
Self said we have pretty much settled on a plan. Bittle spoke about the methodology. Estimated contribution should be $150,000 to reserves. Change will be from $85 base rate for single user and dwelling to $108 plus. That is about 27% increase. The bills go out per quarter. Bittle noted this is partially a deficit catchup. The capital reserve will hold money that the Town will need in the future. The longer the delay for hooking up the pipeline, the more the reserves will be used up. He suggested that many people will not see major change in rate paid. He noted outliers for campground, Cutler School, Princeton apartments, and others as to how to bill these users.

Bittle spoke about the letters sent out to users. The letter said we would be installing meters on all sites, and that isn't so. He noted there are no plans yet for those who have been using metered rates. Bittle suggested that Selectboard utilize New Hampshire Municipal Association (NHMA) for any help they can offer during this process. Crowder asked how measurement were

done. Self said they used per gallon usage. Bittle said we could offer to go back to sewer units for some users. Revenue would be reduced by $12,000 using sewer units instead of using meters. Bittle spoke about the impact of possibly buying the water company, which already has meters. There was a discussion about the possibility the campground would have objections to the way the Town will be billing for sewage. Tempesta said we could lease a flow meter owned by the Town to the campground and have them pay for usage.

Discussion was held about deciding on a date for beginning the new rate structure. Bittle noted at least one apartment building is already asking about when the rate change will be implemented. Tempesta said the Town should go out the gate with the rate change. Self said the Committee needs to make a recommendation to the Selectboard in order for them to invite those impacted to a meeting. It was noted the new method will be more equal for all users. It was also noted the cost per gallon is just under $0.02.

Suggested recommendations to the Selectboard:

- No minimum fee.
- Option to go back to standard user's fee instead of meters.
- Allow anyone who prefers a meter to obtain one, which Self noted has already been allowed. Tempesta said DiRusso would need to standardize they type of meter that would be allowed.
- Encourage the campground to install a flow meter.
- Rate will be $0.02 per gallon from the beginning – covers usage, reserves and deficit
- Reserve target is $150,000 annual contribution

Motion was made by Self to recommend to the Selectboard that the new sewer rate be instituted with no minimum fee, option to return to standard's users fee instead of meters, allow anyone who prefers a meter to obtain one, encourage the campground to install a flow meter, establish a rate of $0.02 per gallon and target $150,000 as annual reserve contribution. There was a second by Crowder and all were in favor. The Selectmen abstained. ***Motion passed.***

Interim Plan

Self said the sewage may be going to the City of Keene in a few years, so we need an interim plan. Infiltration might be useful said DiRusso. He said it would be helpful now as an operational need and he would have to look at costs.

General Discussion on Water Company

Self said the Town may be moving forward with purchasing the Water Company. He suggested the committee members think about implications and discuss further at subsequent meetings.

NEXT MEETING: July 30th at 10:00 am at Whitcomb Hall

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary