Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire

**Water and Sewer Advisory Committee**

Meeting Minutes – August 27, 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**: Committee members Steven Bittel, Scott Self, Ken Greatbatch, Larry Crowder, Sylvester Karasinski, Selectman Bill Hutwelker, Cathy Bergstrom, and Pat Ambrosio.

**Absent:** Stacey Goodale, and Public Works (DPW) Director Joe DiRusso.

**MINUTES:**

Self **moved** to approve the minutes from July 30, 2026. Second made by Bittel. Self pointed out some changes: page 1, last sentence, pumps are providing 300 gallons per minute. Page 2, 3rd paragraph, in 2023, delete identifying service lines. There was no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

**DISCUSSION:**

## West Swanzey Water Company

Self said the pre-application for the grant of $365,000 was submitted for purchase of the Water Company assets and survey costs; no construction costs are included in this number. Final application would be in October. Future grant application would cover updating the system. The purchase agreement has been agreed upon. There will be a Warrant Article for voters to vote on.

Self said the service line does run to Viewpoint. 15,000 gallons a day is design capacity, but the actual usage is about one quarter of that anticipated use. There could be an extra 30,000 gallons available. Crowder suggested that the Mill could be developed with no changes to the water system. Self added that would have to be verified. Fire suppression was discussed. 400 gallons a minute is sufficient to supply fire suppression.

Bittel asked if building another tank would be helpful. Self said it would be a pressure tank. Self said it is something to consider. If both pumps are running, it might be sufficient pressure for fire suppression.

Lead service lines were discussed. There are none in the system as far as we know at the moment. In 1986 when the mill ceased operations, the water company split off from the mill; EPA banned lead use in pipes. This would have to be checked and the only way to do so would be to go into a home basement to see what kind of pipe it is. Self estimated about ten connections would need to be checked. After 1986, all the pipes that were put in as of that time were not made with lead.

Bittel asked if examining lead pipes should be part of the closing of the purchase deal. Crowder asked how to prove to the State of New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (DES) that we have

no lead service. There could be serious costs for digging up lead pipes. Crowder added how the Town might prove to DES when the pipes were put in. Self said the large apartment complexes would not be lead; might be individual homes. Hutwelker noted the committee should know about possible lead pipes prior to October 17th. Crowder said there is still a question as to what will DES accept as proof.

Ambrosio asked about fire hydrants. Self suggested removing restrictions and allowing two pumps to run simultaneously. Self said the water company is not giving the Town fire suppression; just domestic service. Ambrosio said the Town would be liable once the Town is an owner of the company. Crowder said we should require information about gates, and hydrants. Rust will run through the system if you open the gates without knowledge of implications. Self asked about how many gates. Crowder passed out his research on the gates. Crowder said about $342,000 is needed to get the system to where it should be. Self said these items could be done after the Town purchased the company. Greatbatch said the Town would be liable for fire hydrants. He pointed out no money for reconstruction of the system in the current grant. Crowder agreed to contact DES about hydrant requirements. Self further discussed gate valves and when they were installed.

Maintaining the system would fall under DiRusso department. Bittel said there would have to be a hefty increase of annual contribution to DPW. Bittel suggest $100,000 a year for water company maintenance.

Crowder spoke about other capital expenditures coming up like a new fire truck. He said the Selectmen will need to consider the appropriate schedule for expenditures. Hutwelker said we might pull back on a new fire truck. We might refurbish existing vehicles. Hutwelker added DPW station needs to be updated.

Self spoke about ordinances that the Planning Board is looking at. Bittel pointed out voter fatigue going through multiple pages of Zoning Ordinance changes. Self said he could ask the Planning Board to consider the number of Zoning Ordinance changes in order to keep the number reasonably low. Hutwelker spoke about the reorganization of the Zoning Ordinances of the Town being necessary. Self said it could be made into one Warrant Article.

Crowder said he agrees that the water company is good purchase, but it is the unknowns in the system itself that may be problematic. He said we have questions that need to be answered. Self noted the Governance Committee will be helpful. May do Q&A with the public, which would be helpful.
Bittel asked about a schedule to meet with the metered sewer people. He noted an ongoing project for the former Gomarlo property.

**Sewer Engineering Discussion**
Self asked about the engineering meeting with Underwood Engineering. Hutwelker said they want to revisit alternate routes. Four routes: A is along Route 10, A1 would take Sawyers Crossing Road on old Route 9. Cheshire Horse is one high point which would be gravity feed. B would go to Swanzey Center to Rt 32 past the high school and B1 down Eaton Rd. This analysis is required in order to qualify for funding.

Bittel asked about sewer application process. He said target date was around April/May time frame. He said he wants to double check the numbers with start dates and grant filing dates. He said his concern is Underwood's charges to the Town.

Bergstrom asked about a public meeting; Self said it will be about the water company.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

**NEXT MEETING**: September 10th – discussion for Northern Borders grant – 10 am WH

**ADJOURNMENT**
Bittel **moved** to adjourn, and Karasinski seconded the motion without further discussion. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 11:01 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary

DRAFT