Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Swanzey Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA)
Meeting Minutes – June 15, 2026
Whitcomb Hall, Main Street, Swanzey, NH

CALL TO ORDER:
Vice Chair Ann Karaskinski called the meeting to order at Whitcomb Hall at 7:00 pm. Other members present were Jay Ward, Wayne Lechlider and Joe Parisi. Also present were Town Planner, Adam Paquette and Recording Secretary, Susan Ells.

ABSENT: Adam Mulhearn, Alternates Peter Delaney and Jessica Ramsey- Sanchez

OTHERS PRESENT:
Kai Kraemer with FACT TV, Kyle Croteau, Richard Diehl

MINUTES:
The meeting minutes of April 20, 2026 were considered. A motion was made by Wayne Lechlider to approve the minutes as presented. There was a second made by Jay Ward. Joe Parisi suggested an edit; all were in favor of approving the amended minutes; and the motion passed.

PUBLIC HEARING:
None

OTHER DISCUSSIONS

- **Kyle Croteau – Applicant for Alternate Board Member**

Kyle Croteau applied to be an alternate to the Zoning Board; the Board members thanked him for his willingness to serve and welcomed him to the Board. Ann suggested to Kyle that he might want to attend other board and committee meetings to see if there are additional ways he'd like to participate; Kyle replied that he generally watches the other meetings.

Jay Ward made the motion to accept Kyle Croteau's application; Wayne Lechlider seconded the motion; all were in favor and the motion passed.

Adam informed Kyle that he will need to go to Town hall to be sworn in. Once that is done, he will get the communications for the Zoning Board. Ann recommended he take advantage of training available to him and cautioned him that the public might email him and that he should refrain from replying on behalf of the Board.

- **Rules of Procedure Discussion**

Adam explained that the Board requested to review the Rules of Procedures annually; he included his suggested edits in the handout, but he welcomed input. Ann suggested the flow chart be dated so that it is clear which version is the most recent.

Changes proposed to the Rules of Procedure and discussion were as follows:

- Alternate Members #4:
    a. ~~During deliberations, alternate members may participate in the discussions. Alternates shall not be allowed to make motions, second motions, or vote unless seated in the place of a regular member.~~ *Alternate members may participate in discussions until the public hearing is closed. Once closed, alternates shall not make motions, second motions, or vote, unless formally seated for a regular member.*
- Changing the term "clerk" to "recording secretary"
- Meetings #1
    a. Regular Board of Adjustment meetings are held on the third Monday of every month at ~~the Town Hall in Swanzey Center at~~ 7:00 p.m at Whitcomb Hall (17 Main Street, Swanzey, NH 03446), except in January and February, when the meeting will be held on the ~~second~~ fourth Monday. ~~Public Notice must be provided as required by RSA Chapter 91-A. If an emergency situation arises wherein action is required prior to the next scheduled meeting, the necessity for calling a special meeting will be determined by the Chair or in their absence, the Vice-Chair.~~ *Public notice must be provided in accordance with RSA 91-A. If action is required before the next scheduled meeting, the Chair (or Vice-Chair in their absence) shall determine the necessity of a special meeting.*
- Meetings #2
    a. A quorum for all meetings of the Board shall be three members, including alternates sitting in the place of members. ~~As stated in RSA 673:11~~ RSA 674:33,III states that ~~provides that~~ "~~The concurring vote of 3 members of the Board shall be necessary to reverse any action of the administrative official or to decide in favor of the applicant on any matter on which it is required to pass.~~" "the concurring vote of any 3 members of the board shall be necessary to take any action on any matter on which it is required to pass." For this reason, the Board will make every effort to ensure that a full five-member Board is present for the consideration of any appeal.
        i. Discussion on whether virtual participants could vote and general guidelines for virtual participants.
- Meetings #2.b
    a. Discussion on if the same members should be seated when meetings are continued, if RSA's should be cited. Questions on if there should be a distinction between continuing immediately or after a long hearing. Would that change the seating for the next meeting?
- Meetings #3.a
    a. Added to the end: *"The recused member retains the right to speak as a member of the public during the public hearing".*
- Ex Parte Communication #b

    a. Added *"Board members are not authorized to independently enter private property, conduct un-planned site visits, or engage in similar activities. Entry is permitted only with formal Board approval or in strict adherence to affidavits signed during the application process."*

- Ex Parte Communication #c
    a. Board members shall not seek input *(change to testimony or something similar regarding other personal sources)* or advice from *any source* regarding the application outside of the public hearing process.
- Order of Business
    a. Roll call by the *recording secretary*
    b. Minutes of previous meeting.
    c. Public hearings.
    d. Regional impact vote.
    e. Seating of Alternates (before each public hearing).
    f. Unfinished business.
    g. New business.
    h. Communications and miscellaneous.
    i. Adjournment.
- Public Notice #a
    a. Discussed the need for Keene Sentinel notice
- Public Notice #b
    a. ~~Personal~~ *The public hearing notice* shall be made by certified mail to the applicant and all abutters not less than five (5) days before the date of the hearing, *not including the date of posting or the date of the hearing.*
- Public Notice #c
    a. ~~Fees for certified notices and publication in the Keene Sentinel must be~~ *All associated application fees must be* paid by the applicant prior to the public hearing. The Board will not hear the application if fees have not been paid prior to the public hearing. ~~Failure to pay such costs shall constitute valid grounds for the Board to terminate further consideration and to deny appeal without hearing.~~

The Board reviewed each item and discussed possible changes. The draft will be presented at the next meeting so the full Board will be able to review the suggested changes.

Ann asked whether Board members need to attend board meetings in person, or whether virtual participation is allowed. Adam will research and provide an answer at the next meeting.

- **Follow-up Discussion on Zoning Ordinance Audit**

Adam reminded the Board to send him questions that he will forward to Sarah regarding the audit.

ADJOURNMENT
A motion to adjourn was made by Wayne Lechlider and seconded by Jay Ward; all were in favor and the motion passed. Adjournment occurred at 8:42pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Ells, Recording Secretary

Approved on July 20, 2026