2026 Town of Swanzey — Pocket Guide for Voters

A newsletter-style summary of the 2026 Warrant Articles.

What's on the Ballot — 2026 Warrant Articles

Article 1: Election of Town Officers

(1) Moderator 2-Year Term
Sly Karasinski
Daniel LeClair

(2) Selectmen 3-Year Term
James Ward
Michael York
Bruce Tatro
Bill Hutwelker

(1) Selectmen 1-Year Term
Alan Gross
Elizabeth Traynor

(2) Zoning Board 3-Year Term
Wayne Lechlider
Joseph Parisi

(2) Planning Board 3-Year Term
Brandon Self
Victoria Ames

(1) Trustee of Trust Fund3-Year Term
Steven Bittel

(1) Supervisor of the Checklist 6-Year Term
Lynda Faulkner

(1) Stratton Free Library Trustee
Judith Perry

(1) Mt. Caesar Union Library 1-Year Term
Scott Szymcik

The Selectmen wish to thank you for your patronage to the Town of Swanzey! Remember your VOTE COUNTS! We look forward to seeing you at the polls and to your participation in making decisions that will shape the future of Swanzey and the governance surrounding it!

Swanzey Board of Selectmen
Bill Hutwelker
Jim Tempesta
Mark LaBelle

Voting Day Tuesday, March 10th, 2026

SECOND SESSION of TOWN MEETING will be:

WHEN: Tuesday, March 10th
TIME: 8:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.
WHERE: Monadnock Regional High School Gymnasium
600 Old Homestead Hwy, Swanzey, NH

Not Registered to Vote? No Problem! You can register to vote on the same day as the Election. Just be sure to bring proper identification, such as a birth certificate, passport, or naturalization papers & any documentation showing a name change, and a photo ID.

Accessible Voting

Before Election Day – Voter's with a disability or illness can vote with an absentee ballot by mail or in person before election day (March 10th, 2026). Go to www.swanzeynh.gov/government/townclerk/electioninformation or call the Town Clerk's Office at 603-352-7411 Ext. 102 during normal business hours.

On Election Day -There are accessible voting systems at the polls.

Article 2: Planning Board – Zoning Amendments (Amendments 1–7)

Article 2 To vote by ballot on the following amendments to the Town of Swanzey Zoning Ordinance Recommended by the Planning Board:

Article 2 explanation: The explanation for the Planning Board's proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance are shown here. The full text of the amendments in the Town Warrant are available on the Town's website and at Town Hall. The Planning Board sought public feedback on the proposed zoning amendments at public hearings held in the months of December and January.

Amendment 1 rewrites Section VII (Wetlands Conservation District) to update permitted uses and adopt a formal conditional use process to build within the district. It establishes wetland buffers and setbacks on more significant wetlands, revises permitted uses and aligns leach field and dry well setbacks with state standards. This amendment reflects months of collaborative work by the Planning Board and Conservation Commission and is supported by both bodies. *(The full text of the proposed changes is available at Town Hall and on our website.)*

Amendment 2 changes the attached accessory dwelling unit (AADU) ordinance in line with HB 577 (State legislation passed last year). This removes the requirement to have an interior door between the principal unit and AADU, removes the requirement to have a second means of egress from the AADU, and reduces the number of parking spaces required per unit.

Amendment 3 changes the detached accessory dwelling unit (DADU) ordinance in line with HB 577 (State legislation passed last year). This removes the special exception requirement for DADU's. They are now allowed by right in all zones that permit single-family homes. This also reduces the number of parking spaces required per unit.

Amendment 4 permits two-family homes in the Rural/Agricultural district. Because of this, it removes two-family homes from the Special Exception section of Section IV, Article A.2.g.

Amendment 5 changes parking requirements for one, two, and multi-family dwellings as directed by SB 284 (state legislation passed last year).

1. Off-street parking shall be provided as shown in the following table:

One-family dwelling & two-family dwelling	~~2 spaces per unit~~ *1 space per unit*
Multi-family dwelling	~~1.5 spaces for 1st bedroom plus 0.5 spaces for each additional bedroom~~ *1 space per unit*

Amendment 6 rezones multiple parcels in North Swanzey between Marcy Hill Road and Route 32. The parcels included will be moved into the Residence District. These parcels are: **Map 210:** Lots 12, 13, and 14. **Map 219:** Lots 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 46, and 50. **Map 220:** Lots 64, 118, 121, 127, and 133. A map is available at Town Hall and on our website.

Amendment 7 (Petitioned Zoning Amendment) Explanation: This would change the zoning on Base Hill Road from Business and Commercial/Industrial to primarily Residence. Lots between New Run Brook and Rte. 10 would remain Commercial/Industrial, and lots with currently operating businesses would remain zoned for business. Two lots owned by Yale Forest (Map 203 Lots 8 & 13) and one that is owned by All Purpose Storage (Map 203 Lot 20-1) would be rezoned to Rural/Agricultural. A portion of Map 203 Lot 25 that abuts Base Hill Road, owned by the Monadnock Humane Society, would be rezoned to Residence. The residents of Base Hill Road want to re-zone to be more in line with the rural/low-density zoning on Keene's portion of the road. *The Planning Board opposes this petitioned zoning amendment as they believe it constitutes "spot zoning" and infringes upon the property rights of established businesses that have legally acquired property along Base Hill.*



Article 3: Public Works Facility (Bond)

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Million, Two-Hundred Thousand Dollars ($1,200,000) for the purpose of preparing plans and specifications, and constructing, equipping and furnishing a new Public Works building on Town owned property located at 98 Pine Street; One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars ($150,000) to come from the Public Works Facilities Expendable Trust Fund, and One Million and Fifty Thousand Dollars ($1,050,000) of such sum to be raised through the issuance of bonds or notes under and in compliance with the Municipal Finance Act, RSA 33:1 et seq., as amended; to authorize the Selectmen to issue, negotiate, sell and deliver said bonds and notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon and the maturity and other terms thereof; to authorize the Selectmen to apply for, obtain and accept federal, state or other aid, if any, which may be available for said project and to comply with all laws applicable to said project; to authorize the Selectmen to take any other action or to pass any other vote relative thereto. (3/5 Ballot vote required)

Article 3 Explanation *– (See details below). Approximate Tax Rate Impact = $1.03/$1,000 based on 2025 assessed values*

RECOMMENDED BY SELECTMEN

ARTICLE 3 – NEW PUBLIC WORKS FACILITY

Safer, faster storm response • Protects Town equipment • Long-term savings

Requires 3/5 ballot vote	**Recommended by Selectmen & CIP Committee**	**$1.2M total: $150k Trust + $1.05M bonds/notes**

THE PROBLEM: The Current Facility Can't Keep Up

- Plow trucks do not fit in the current facility with plows attached; installing plows in inclement weather can add up to an hour in delayed response time.
- Equipment stored outdoors in snow and ice increases wear and maintenance and increases safety risks.
- Aging, cramped spaces create safety and efficiency challenges.
- Ventilation, Fire Safety, ADA, and staff/equipment separation are outdated and incompliant.

THE SOLUTION: A Modern, Compliant Facility

✓ Faster, safer storm response—no more installing plows outside in inclement weather.

✓ Protects millions of dollars in Town equipment; reduces corrosion and repairs.

✓ Modern ventilation, fire safety, ADA compliance, and safer workflow.

✓ Improves response times and long-term cost control.



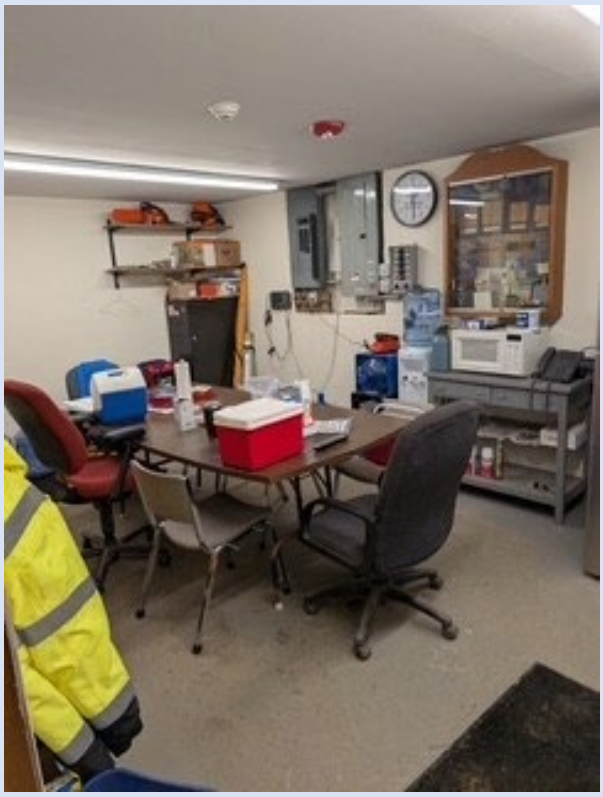
Crews mounting plows during active snowfall.



Many attachments are stored outside, exposed to winter weather.



Tight, outdated bays make maneuvering large equipment difficult and unsafe.



Staff spaces are undersized and outdated.

ARTICLE 3 AT A GLANCE: $1.2M total — $150,000 from existing Expendable Trust; $1,050,000 through bonds/notes. Requires 3/5 ballot vote: Recommended by Selectmen & Capital Improvement Committee.

A YES vote invests in safety, reliability, and faster winter response for every resident.



Article 4: Terminate Swanzey Revenue Development District (TIF)

To see if the Town shall vote to amend the Swanzey Revenue Development District Plan, established in 1999 pursuant to RSA 162-K, to terminate the Swanzey Revenue Development District upon the payment in full of all outstanding debts and obligations; and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to take all actions related to and necessary to effectuate such termination, including, but not limited to, payment of outstanding obligations, disposition of remaining funds in accordance with RSA 162-K:10, and notification to the New Hampshire Department of Revenue Administration. (Majority Vote Required)

Article 4 Explanation *– Article 4 asks voters to approve an amendment to the* ***Swanzey Revenue Development District Plan - to terminate the Tax Increment Finance District (TIF)*** *(located in the Industrial Park Zone)* ***once all outstanding debts and obligations are paid in full****. The Selectmen do not anticipate making any additional infrastructure improvements within the district and therefore recommends terminating it. This means that any remaining funds (once the bond is paid off) may be* ***distributed in accordance with State law and rolled into the Town's general fund****, rather than remaining in the TIF fund. The article also authorizes the Board of Selectmen to take all necessary actions to complete the termination, including settling obligations and notifying the New Hampshire Department of Revenue Administration.*

RECOMMENDED BY SELECTMEN



Article 5: Rescind Prior Bond Authorization

To see if the Town will vote to rescind the remaining balance of $900,000 from the bond authorization which was previously approved as Article 5 at the March 9, 1999, Town Meeting. (3/5 Ballot vote required)

Article 5 Explanation *– This Article will* ***rescind the remaining $900,000 from the 1999 bond authorization****- coincides with Article 4, once the bond is paid off.*

RECOMMENDED BY SELECTMEN



Article 6: Operating Budget

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the First Session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling $8,939,036? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be $8,891,785, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. (Majority vote required)

Article 6 Explanation*: This Article* ***funds the day-to-day operations of the Town*** *and does* ***not*** *include* ***special warrant articles or other separately voted appropriations.*** *If the article does not pass, the Town will have to operate under a default budget of $8,891,785, which is essentially last year's budget with adjustments required by law or prior Town actions. (Approximate Tax Rate Impact =$0.56 / $1,000 based on 2025 assessed values)*

RECOMMENDED BY SELECTMEN

Article 7: Capital Reserve & Expendable Trust Funds

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Hundred and Twenty-Seven Thousand and Five Hundred Dollars ($527,500) by general taxation to be placed in the following expendable trust and capital reserve accounts of the Town? (Majority vote required)

Expendable Trust Funds (ETF)		Capital Reserve Funds (CRF)	
Revaluation & Update	$40,000	Fire Stations	$10,000
Town Hall Repairs & Maint. /Improvements	$200,000	Fire Trucks	$30,000
Emergency Communications	$10,000	Police Cruisers	$75,000
Fire Dept. Tools & Equip.	$10,000	Recreation Facility Improvements	$20,000
Fire Ponds	$20,000	Recycling Center Improvements	$50,000
Police Facilities Maintenance	$5,000	Golden Rod Grange	$7,500
Police IMS (IT Managed Services)	$5,000		
Stratton Free Library	$30,000		
Tonw Hall IMS (IT Managed Services)	$10,000		
Mount Ceasar Union Library	$5,000		

***Article 7 Explanation**: This article asks voters to raise and appropriate **$527,500** through **general taxation** to be deposited into various Expendable Trusts and Capital Reserve funds. These accounts allow the Town to plan ahead and set aside funds for known and anticipated capital needs. This helps to **reduce the risk of large, unexpected expenses** and **helps stabilize the tax rate over time.** Key items include **funding for property revaluations**, which are required by the State every five years to ensure fair and equitable assessments. The next revaluation is projected to cost $120,000 or more in 2029, and this appropriation continues to **build toward that obligation**. Funding is also requested for Town Hall repairs and maintenance, with a **$200,000 allocation** representing Phase I of planned improvements to Town Hall. These improvements include renovating the former fire station space beneath Town Hall to expand office space, and constructing an exterior staircase to provide a safe, direct access without requiring staff or the public to exit and re-enter the building. The goal is to create adequate office space and a conference room and utilize the available space. (Approximate Tax Rate Impact = $0.52 / $1,000 based on 2025 assessed values)*

RECOMMENDED BY SELECTMEN

Article 8: Public Works – Capital Reserve & Expendable Trust Funds

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Seven Hundred Thousand Dollars ($700,000) by general taxation to be placed in the following expendable trust and capital reserve accounts of the Town? (Majority vote required)

Expendable Trust Funds (ETF)		Capital Reserve Funds (CRF)	
Public Works Facilities	$5,000	Highway & Cemetery Equip	$200,000
Road Rehab & Reconstruction	$400,000	Sidewalks	$35,000
Rail Trails	$10,000	Town Bridges	$25,000
Cemetery Expansion Fund	$5,000	Town Dams	$10,000
		Covered Bridges	$10,000

***Article 8 Explanation**: This article asks voters to raise and appropriate **$700,000** through general taxation to be placed into designated Expendable Trust and Capital Reserve funds. The largest portion of this request is for **Road Rehabilitation and Reconstruction**, which supports ongoing maintenance and improvement of the Town's road network. Regular investment in roadways **helps extend pavement life**, **improves safety**, and **reduces the need for more costly full reconstructions in the future**. Funding is also proposed for **Highway and Cemetery Equipment**, allowing the Town to plan for the replacement of **major Public Works equipment** that is critical for road*

*maintenance, winter operations, and cemetery services. Additional requests support **Public Works facilities**, **sidewalk improvements**, **town bridges**, **covered bridges**, and **town dams**, all of which require periodic maintenance and long-term planning to **ensure public safety and preserve important infrastructure assets**. Funding for **rail trails** and the **cemetery expansion fund** supports continued access, recreation, and future burial capacity. By setting aside funds incrementally through these **trust and reserve accounts**, the Town can proactively manage **Public Works infrastructure needs, reduce the risk of emergency repairs**, and help stabilize the tax rate by avoiding large, unexpected capital expenditures. (Approximate Tax Rate Impact = $0.68 / $1,000 based on 2025 assessed values)*

RECOMMENDED BY SELECTMEN



Article 9: Establish Infrastructure Expendable Trust Fund

To see if the Town will vote to establish an Infrastructure Expendable Trust Fund per RSA 31:19-a for expenses related to projects addressing infrastructure needs, and to raise and appropriate the sum of $10,000 to be placed in said fund with this amount to come from general taxation. Further to name the Board of Selectmen as agents to expend from said fund. (Majority vote required)

***Article 9 Explanation**: This article asks voters to approve the creation of a **new Infrastructure Expendable Trust Fund** to help pay for future projects addressing the **Town's infrastructure needs**. It also proposes **raising and appropriating $10,000** through general taxation **to establish the fund** and naming the **Board of Selectmen** as the agents authorized to expend monies from it. (Approximate Tax Rate Impact = $0.01 / $1,000 based on 2025 assessed values)* **RECOMMENDED BY SELECTMEN**



Article 10: Rescind SB2 and Return to Traditional Town Meeting

Shall the Town rescind the provisions of RSA 40:13 (known as SB 2), as adopted by the town on March 8, 2005, so that the official ballot will no longer be used for voting on all questions, but only for the election of officers and certain other questions for which the official ballot is required by state law? (3/5 Ballot vote required)

***Article 10 Explanation**: This article asks voters whether the Town should **rescind the SB 2 form of town meeting** adopted in 2005. If approved, the Town would return to a **traditional town meeting**, where warrant articles are discussed and voted on from the floor, rather than by official ballot. The official ballot would still be used for election of officers and any articles required by State law.*

RECOMMENDED BY SELECTMEN



Article 11: Elderly Tax Exemptions — Modify Amounts & Limits

To see if the Town shall vote to modify the Elderly exemptions for property tax, pursuant to N.H. RSA 72:27-a, based on assessed value, for qualified taxpayers, to be as follows: for a person 65-74 years of age increase the exemption amount to $50,000 (currently $25,000); for a person 75-79 years of age increase to $75,000 (currently $35,000); for a person 80 years of age or older increase to $100,000 (currently $40,000), and additionally adjust the maximum income level for a single person to $35,000 (currently $24,000), and for a married couple to $60,000 (currently $32,000).

To qualify the person must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least three (3) consecutive years preceding April 1st, must own the real estate individually, or jointly, or if the real estate is owned by his or her spouse, they must have been married for at least five (5) years, in addition the taxpayers must have a net income of not more than

$35,000 (currently $24,000) if single, or if married, a combined net income of $60,000 (currently $32,000), and own net assets not in excess of $70,000 (currently $50,000) excluding the value of the person's primary residence which must be in the Town of Swanzey. (Majority vote required)

Article 11 Explanation: *This article asks voters to approve increases to the Town's* ***Elderly Property Tax Exemptions*** *for* ***qualified residents*** *under RSA 72:27-a. The proposal would* ***raise the exemption amounts*** *based on age and* ***increase the income limits*** *used to determine eligibility.*

RECOMMENDED BY SELECTMEN

PROPOSED ELDERLY EXEMPTION AMOUNTS:

AGE 65-74: INCREASE FROM $25,000 TO $50,000 IN ASSESSED VALUE

AGE 75-79: INCREASE FROM $35,000 TO $75,000 IN ASSESSED VALUE

AGE 80+: INCREASE FROM $40,000 TO $100,000 IN ASSESSED VALUE

INCOME LIMITS

SINGLE: INCREASE FROM $24,000 TO $35,000

MARRIED: INCREASE FROM $32,000 TO $60,000

ASSET LIMIT:

INCREASE FROM $50,000 TO $60,000



Article 12: Optional Tax Credit — Service-Connected Total Disability

To see if the Town will vote to modify the Optional Tax Credit for Military Service-Connected Total Disability under RSA 72:35, by increasing the amount of the credit from $4,000 to $4,500, to take effect for the 2026 property tax year. (Majority vote required)

Article 12 Explanation*: This article proposes increasing the Town's* ***Optional Property Tax Credit for Veterans with a service-connected disability*** *from* ***$4,000 to $4,500****, effective for the* ***2026 tax year****, as authorized under RSA 72:35. The intent is to maintain the current level of tax relief for qualifying veterans following a recent change in state law. Previously, the Town was allowed to* ***combine ("stack")*** *the general optional veterans' credit (****$500 under RSA 72:28****) with the service-connected disability credit (****$4,000****), for a total benefit of* ***$4,500****. Due to a change in statute, these credits can no longer be stacked. If approved, Article 12 increases the* ***Service-connected Disability Credit*** *by* ***$500****, ensuring that eligible veterans continue to receive a* ***total tax credit of $4,500****, consistent with what they received prior to the changes in law.*

RECOMMENDED BY SELECTMEN



Article 13: Ashuelot Rail Trail Improvements (Non-lapsing)

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate $1,822,712 for improvements to the Ashuelot Rail Trail. The Town will be reimbursed 80% in the amount of $1,458,170 by the NH Department of Transportation's Transportation Alternatives Program and $364,542 from the undesignated fund balance. No amount to be raised from general taxation. This special warrant article will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until the project is completed or by December 31, 2031, whichever is sooner. (Majority vote required)

Article 13 Explanation: *This article updates the* ***timeline and cost*** *for the Ashuelot Rail Trail Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) project, originally approved by voters in 2020 (Article 9)****.*** *The project was added to the State's* ***Ten-Year Transportation Plan*** *through the Town's TAP application in 2018. In 2023, the project scope was refined to focus on a section of the Ashuelot Rail Trail which experienced* ***multiple washouts*** *from the July 8th, 2023, floods. This Article allows the Town* ***additional time and funding*** *to complete the necessary rail trail improvement project.*

RECOMMENDED BY SELECTMEN



Article 14: Lower Winchester Street / Route 10 Improvements (Non-lapsing)

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate $145,000 for the Lower Winchester Street / Rt. 10 improvement project. The sum comes from the undesignated fund balance. This special warrant article will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until the project is completed or by December 31, 2031, whichever is sooner. (Majority vote required)

Article 14 Explanation: *This article authorizes funding for* ***Swanzey's $145,000 share*** *of the Lower Winchester Street / Route 10 improvement project. The full amount will be paid from the Town's* ***undesignated fund balance****, meaning* ***no new taxes are required****. The appropriation represents* ***100% of the Town's local project cost*** *and is a* ***one-time, non-lapsing appropriation****, remaining available until the project is completed. This investment supports needed transportation and infrastructure improvements near Market Basket.*

RECOMMENDED BY SELECTMEN



Article 15: Petition:

Shall the Town vote to delay the removal and replacement of historic town owned Christian Hill Road Bridge over the Ashuelot Rail Trail (NH DOT Bridge NO. 098/ 122) for one year; and to furthermore, authorize the Selectman to appoint a committee to study any impact the removal replacement will have on the West Swanzey historical district it is located in; and to report back to the selectmen, its recommendations for the future of the bridge no later than October, 2026. **SUBMITTED BY PETITION**

NOT RECOMMENDED BY SELECTMEN ***SEE SELECTMEN'S RESPONSE BELOW ARTICLE 16***



Article 16: Petition:

Shall the Town vote to preserve the historic, town owned Christian Hill Road bridge over the Ashuelot Rail Trail (NHDOT Bridge No. 098/122) in its current location. **SUBMITTED BY PETITION**

NOT RECOMMENDED BY SELECTMEN

The Board of Selectmen do NOT RECOMMEND Article 15 or Article 16 and here is why:

1. ***Existing State Agreement:*** *The Town has already entered into a formal agreement (2021) with the State of New Hampshire for this project. Delaying the project would place the Town in default of that agreement.*

2. **Financial Risk to the Town***: The construction phase of the project is 100% federally funded; however, engineering costs have been funded by the Town at an 80/20 split (State/Local). If the Town defaults on the agreement the Town would not be able to be reimbursed for the 80% (or $137,000+) already spent on engineering costs.*

3. ***Loss of Mitigation Materials and Funding****: As part of the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources (NHDHR) Historical Assessment, the timber and materials from the Christian Hill Bridge are intended to be reused along portions of the Ashuelot Rail Trail near the Eversource substation. A project default could jeopardize this arrangement and associated funding to mitigate the areas along the Rail Trail that are vulnerable and impassable (from the 2023 floods).*

4. Prior Support for the Project: *Previous Town votes that were passes by Voters (such as 2020 Warrant Article 8) and prior Boards of Selectmen have supported the current Christian Hill Bridge project. The current Board remains consistent with those past decisions.*

Town of Swanzey
620 Old Homestead Hwy.
PO Box 10009
Swanzey, NH 03446-009
(603) 352-7411
www.swanzeynh.gov

PRSRT. STD. PAID

Swanzey, NH
Permit #11
ECRWSS

Postal Patron

Swanzey, NH 03446

2026 Town of Swanzey — Pocket Guide for Voters

Bring it with you to the Polls!

Zoning Amendments			**Board of Selectmen Articles**					
Amendment 1	Y	N	Article 3	Y	N	Article 11	Y	N
Amendment 2	Y	N	Article 4	Y	N	Article 12	Y	N
Amendment 3	Y	N	Article 5	Y	N	Article 13	Y	N
Amendment 4	Y	N	Article 6	Y	N	Article 14	Y	N
Amendment 5	Y	N	Article 7	Y	N	Article 15	Y	N
Amendment 6	Y	N	Article 8	Y	N	Article 16	Y	N
Petition Amendment 7			Article 9	Y	N			
	Y	N	Article 10	Y	N			



You can find the full warrant text, sample ballot, and updates by scanning the QR code below or by visiting https://www.swanzeynh.gov/community/2026_town_meeting_info.php