

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Board of Selectmen
Meeting – November 3, 2015
Swanzey Town Hall, 620 Old Homestead Highway, Swanzey, NH

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Deborah J. Davis at 6:00 p.m. at the Swanzey Town Hall. Present were Chair Davis, Kenneth P. Colby, Jr., and W. William Hutwelker III. Also present was Town Administrator Michael Branley and Recording Secretary Beverly Bernard.

OTHERS PRESENT

Director of Planning and Community Development Sara Carbonneau, Police Chief Tom DeAngelis, Bookkeeper Theresa Louder, Conservation Commission Chair Wally Smith, Open Space Committee Chair Victoria Ames, Sewer Commissioner Glenn Page and Sewer Administrative Assistant Sandi Page.

MINUTES

- The regular meeting Minutes of October 27, 2015 were considered. There was a **motion** by Colby to approve the regular Minutes of October 27, 2015. The motion was seconded by Hutwelker with no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***
- The non-public meeting Minutes of October 27, 2015 were considered. There was a **motion** by Colby to approve the non-public Minutes of October 27, 2015. The motion was seconded Hutwelker with no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion was made by Colby to approve the Consent Agenda. There was a second by Hutwelker. There was no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

- Payroll Manifest
- Payables Manifest
- Release of Public Assistance Lien
- Intent-to-cut for Map 52 Lot 9
- Intent-to-cut for Map 51 Lot 1 & Map 8

All visitors temporarily left the room at 6:01 p.m.

Non-public session(s) per RSA 91-A3II(b) – Hiring of Public Employee(s)

Motion Colby to enter Non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3II(a) Personnel Matter(s). The motion was seconded by Hutwelker. The Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to go into non-public session at 6:01 p.m. ***Motion passed.*** Present were the Board members Kenneth P. Colby, Jr., Deborah J. Davis, W. William Hutwelker, III, Town Administrator Michael Branley and Recording Secretary Beverly Bernard.

Motion was made by Colby to seal the minutes of the non-public session because it was determined that the minutes render a proposed action ineffective. The motion was seconded by Hutwelker. The Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to seal the minutes. ***Motion passed.***

Motion was made by Hutwelker to leave non-public session and return to public session. The motion was seconded by Colby, with all in favor. **Motion passed.** Non-public session ended at 6:09 p.m.

APPOINTMENTS

Police Chief Thomas De Angelis – Purchase of Police Cruiser

Chief De Angelis discussed with the Board his proposal to purchase a police cruiser from the Police Department's 2015 operating budget and outfit the cruiser from the special duty revolving fund which has in it approximately \$24,000. DeAngelis said car 3 has 80,000 miles on it. He would like to rotate that car out of patrol. He also spoke about painting one of the cars black and providing it to the detective for his use. DeAngelis mentioned the possibility of donating one car to Town Hall to be used by staff as a pool car. He said otherwise he will turn the car in for resale. He said based on his projections \$27,000 will be left in his operating budget at the end of the year due to six months saving in salary because of losing staff. He said he would like to find a leftover 2015 SUV to purchase. He spoke about outfitting the cruiser with \$10,000 from the special duty revolving fund. Bookkeeper Lounder noted that if there is money left in the operating budget, we try to use it because it cannot be rolled over. DeAngelis mentioned that 2017 is a year the Town would normally lease 3 cruisers on the rotation year for the cruisers. If the cruiser is purchased this year we may be able to finance only two cruiser in 2017. There was discussion regarding adding a battery pack for keeping lights on for special duty, which also can be used at accident scenes. These save fuel since the engine does not have to run to keep the lights on while the cruiser is parked.

Motion was made by Colby to authorize DeAngelis to purchase a new cruiser and outfit it as necessary and enter into a negotiated purchase of a cruiser with funds out of the police department operating budget for up to \$25,000 and outfitting the cruiser with expenditure up to \$10,000 from the special duty revolving fund. There was a second by Hutwelker. All were in favor. **Motion passed.**

Dumping on California Brook Road

Branley mentioned DeAngelis has spoken to the Cersosimo representative regarding the dumping of trash and illegal activities on California Brook Road DeAngelis spoke about being able to drive up to the top of the road. He also said that the patrol officers have been instructed to patrol the road as often as they can. DeAngelis said he is aware of where partying is going on about 1 mile up the road. He said his issue is in which Town some of the partying is going on and whether Swanzey police would have jurisdiction. Carbonneau said there was a granite marker for Chesterfield/Swanzey town lines and that perhaps the police could find that marker to determine in which Town the activity is occurring.

School Meeting Regarding Possible School Resource Officer (SRO) for the Monadnock School District

DeAngelis spoke about meeting with Monadnock Regional School District Business Manager Jane Fortson and some other folks from the school district about the possibility of a full-time SRO for the school district, which would cost about \$95,000, as estimated by DeAngelis. DeAngelis also mentioned the possibility of a part-time officer with no benefits, on an hourly basis, for approximately six hours a day (180 days a year), which would cost less. DeAngelis said the school district would like to keep the School Security Officer (SSO) even when an SRO is hired. The SRO does not travel, but the SSO could travel to some of the other schools in the district. The question arose as to whether it would be easy to recruit someone for a part-time position. Branley said the position could be structured so that a retired police officer could apply for it, although the person would not need to be retired. The maximum is 32 hour per week for a part-time officer who is a retired police officer collecting a pension so the budget would be for 6 hours per day. DeAngelis said a part-time SRO is better than no officer at all.

DeAngelis left the meeting at 6:41 p.m.

Bookkeeper Theresa Louder – Affordable Care Act (ACA) Compliance

Louder reviewed with the Board the following:

- The draft policy related to the ACA (to be adopted into the personnel policy)
- The draft election form for qualified part-time employees (QPTE)
- Determination for whether the Board would like a separate line item in the budget for Affordable Care Act costs included in the Insurance section of the operating budget.

The Board agreed on a separate line item in the budget for Affordable Care Act costs. Louder referred to the draft policy – basing employee benefit on **SCHEDULED** work hours. Louder noted that the policy would entail not offering benefit of payment-in-lieu to qualified part-timers. She spoke about the election form that would provide confirmation that the Town offered coverage.

Colby **moved** to incorporate the draft policy related to the Affordable Care Act compliance into the Town personnel policy as proposed. There was a second to the motion by Hutwelker and no further discussion. All were in favor. **Motion passed.**

Colby **moved** to approve the election form for qualified part-time employees as proposed. There was a second to the motion by Hutwelker and no further discussion. All were in favor. **Motion passed.**

The Board thanked Louder for her work on this project and Louder left the meeting at 6:46 p.m.

Director of Planning & Community Development Sara Carbonneau – Discontinuance of Segment of Whitcomb Road

Carbonneau met with the Board on behalf of Kathryn Wrona, who is requesting that the Town consider a complete discontinuance of a portion of Whitcomb Road. This portion has reverted to Class VI status due to lack of maintenance for more than five years and Town Meeting vote is required to completely discontinue the public's right of way over this portion of road. Carbonneau said Wrona expressed safety concerns for visiting grandchildren. She said the road would revert to half belonging to Wrona and the other half to neighbor Michael Madden. Carbonneau said she will confirm with Madden that he is in favor of discontinuing the road. The Board agreed to put a request to discontinue that portion of Whitcomb Road on the draft warrant. Carbonneau said that there will be an agreement asked of Wrona and Madden that there will be no future suit against the Town for damages by discontinuing the road.

Keene State Geography Students Visit with Planning Board

Carbonneau said that on December 10, 2015 Keene State College students will be presenting to the Planning Board at 6:00 p.m. a proposed project to map trails and possibly sidewalks in Swanzey. They may also propose to maintain the resulting maps. Carbonneau said the presentation will take about 20 minutes.

Value Proposition for Full Time Fire Inspector

Carbonneau noted that Fire Chief Norm Skantze has requested the Board consider a full-time EMS Coordinator and Fire Inspector; both positions are currently part-time. She distributed a value proposition paper from Code Enforcement Officer Mike Jasmin who states that the Fire Inspector is an invaluable ally when performing investigations into safety issues for local residences and businesses. Based on her and Mike J.'s interactions with the fire department they are not in a position to speak to the EMS Coordinator position.

Easement Approval by the Conservation Commission for Haley Park

Branley mentioned the need to plan easement public hearings for Haley Park and that the Conservation Commission voted yesterday in favor of recommending to the Board that the easement be granted. Branley will

schedule the public hearing. Carbonneau mentioned the condition of approval by the Planning Board was that Haley Park will pay any legal fees.

Proposed Car for Town Hall Staff Use

Brief discussion was held about a pool car as proposed by Chief DeAngelis. Carbonneau said that a pool car might be used mostly by Code Enforcement Officer Mike Jasmin since he is on the road a lot. She mentioned for out-of-town municipal conferences a Town-owned car could be used instead of personal vehicles which are expensed for mileage costs. The Board decided that they needed time to consider the idea and obtain information for insurance costs, the total costs for travel that the Town has paid to employees in the past and an estimate of mileage for maintenance purposes. Branley said it would probably be cost neutral. Colby noted there are a lot of maintenance expenses to be considered such as tires, gasoline, oil changes, and the like.

2016 Budget Appointments

- **Land Use, Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC), Health Officer** – Carbonneau discussed the recommended budget for some of the accounts. Two new accounts were suggested under Land Use: “Community Developing Consulting” and “Software Support”. Carbonneau said that the “Community Developing Consulting” funds can be used for professional service fees. “Software Support” replaces “New Equipment”. She noted that the requested budget is \$618.00 more than 2015 budget. She spoke about EDAC requesting \$5,000 with \$3,000 dedicated to Stu Arnett Consulting for professional guidance for Swanzey. The rest of the budget is allocated for part-time secretarial services, visitor refreshments, and signage. Branley stated that he spoke to Glenn Page the TIF District Advisory Board Chairman and he stated they did not need an operating budget for 2016. Carbonneau spoke about the recommended budget for the Health Officer who can average about 5 hours per week based on the amount budgeted in 2015. Previously the position was paid a stipend and now it is an hourly position. Carbonneau said that she, Branley, and the health officer want to raise that to 8 hours per week for 2016. Carbonneau said that the Health Officer is fine with 8 hours per week although she originally requested about 10 hours per week. There was a brief discussion about Town phones utilized by the Health Officer and the Code Enforcement Officer. Carbonneau said that often the Health Officer goes out with another person – for safety reasons and to corroborate a story. This is also true with the Code Enforcement Officer. Hutwelker noted “Mileage” is a new account.

Carbonneau left the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

- **Sewer Commission – Sewer Fund** – Page mentioned wanting to raise the contribution to the Capital Reserve for West Swanzey Waste Water Treatment because major expenses were experienced in 2015 for sludge removal. Page said that West Swanzey Waste Water Treatment is at the bottom range of fees in New Hampshire but North Swanzey Waste Water System fees are at the top of the fee schedule. Page spoke about replacing a generator that is old diesel generator with a new propane generator out of the 2015 budget. He mentioned that electricity is the largest expense. There was a discussion about required testing for phosphorus and treatment for sludge buildup.

Sandi and Glen Page left at 7:28 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

2015 Tax Rate Setting

At the meeting on September 14, 2015 the tax rate was discussed in the context of the MS 434 without knowing final property values or what the School, State Education, and County rates would look like. Branley further stated that staff went over the revenue figures with the DRA and after the Board signed the MS 1 on October 27,

2014 the final values were submitted to the New Hampshire Department of Revenue Administration (DRA). He provided final values and appropriations for the other entities and based on your prior revenue decision, the tax rate would look as follows:

	2014	2015
Town	5.45	5.62
County	3.37	3.45
State Ed	2.49	2.39
School	15.01	14.84
Total Rate	\$26.32	\$26.30

He went on to suggest the following options for consideration by the Board:

- **Option One** - Reduce fund balance applied to taxes \$10,000 to give a total tax rate equal to 2014 – Town rate of \$5.64 and total rate of \$26.32.
- **Option Two** - Reduce fund balance applied to taxes \$18,000 to give a Town rate equal to your decision on 9/14/15 Town rate of \$5.65 and Total rate of \$26.33.
- **Option Three** - Reduce fund balance applied to taxes \$152,000 to give a Town tax rate of \$5.90 (an increase in the Town portion of 8.25%), which would result in an overall tax rate of \$26.58 (an increase of 1%). Branley stated that by taking the action the Board would present what he thought was a palatable overall rate increase to the taxpayers while leaving more in the fund balance, putting the Town in a better financial position. For a property valued at \$200,000 the overall tax bill would increase from a 2014 bill of \$5,264 ($\$200,000 \times \$26.32 / \1000) \$52 to \$5,316 ($\$200,000 \times \$26.58 / \$1,000$).

The Board agreed to select **Option Three** to reduce the fund balance applied to taxes \$152,000 to give a Town tax rate of \$5.90 and an overall tax rate of \$26.58.

Motion was made by Hutwelker to direct the Town Administrator to set the 2015 overall tax rate at \$26.58. There was a second to the motion by Colby and no further discussion. All were in favor. **Motion passed.**

NEW BUSINESS

Davis mentioned Kinder Morgan, who is proposing a gas pipeline through sections of Richmond, is going to be at the Richmond’s Conservation Commission meeting on Thursday, November 5, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

Ames and Smith left the meeting at 7:37 p.m.

Non-public session(s) per RSA 91-A3II(b) – Hiring of Public Employee(s)

Motion Colby to enter Non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3II(a) Personnel Matter(s). The motion was seconded by Hutwelker. The Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to go into non-public session at 7:42 p.m. **Motion passed.** Present were the Board members Kenneth P. Colby, Jr., Deborah J. Davis, W. William Hutwelker, III, Town Administrator Michael Branley and Recording Secretary Beverly Bernard.

Motion was made by Hutwelker to seal the minutes of the non-public session because it was determined that the minutes render a proposed action ineffective. The motion was seconded by Colby. The Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to seal the minutes. **Motion passed.**

Motion was made by Hutwelker to leave non-public session and return to public session. The motion was seconded by Colby, with all in favor. **Motion passed.** Non-public session ended at 7:45 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn was made by Davis, second by Colby. No further discussion. All were in favor. **Motion passed.** Adjournment occurred at 7:46 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Beverly Bernard".

Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary
Approved on November 10, 2015