

Fall / Winter 2024

Swanzey NH



Uncovered

For a full color copy, visit swanzeynh.gov.

Inside



Introduction to Our New
 HR Coordinator Pg. 2
 Emergency Mgmt. Pg. 2
 Job OpportunitiesPg. 3
 N. Swanzey Water &
 Fire Precinct..... Pg. 3
 Planning & Economic
 Development Pg. 4
 Tax Collector..... Pg. 5
 Fire Department Pg. 6
 General Lead Info Pg. 7
 Fire Station Advisory
 Committee Pg. 8
 Assessment of Properties &
 Next Revaluation Pg. 9
 Purchase of W. Swanzey
 Water Company..... Pg. 9
 Mt. Caesar Union
 Library Pg. 10
 Stratton Free Library..... Pg. 10
 Golden Rod Grange Pg. 11
 Rail Trail Advisory
 Committee Pg. 12
 Conservation Comm. Pg. 13
 Police Department..... Pg. 14
 Recreation Department . Pg. 16
 Energy Commission Pg. 17
 Recycling Center Pg. 18
 Dept. of Public Works ... Pg. 19
 Upcoming Important
 Events..... Pg. 20
 New Town Hall Hours Pg. 20

The Town of Swanzey Takes Important Steps to Protect Our Historic Covered Bridges

This year, the Town worked with our State legislators and other communities to change two state laws related to covered bridges to help protect these important historic resources. These changes increased the fines for oversized or overweight vehicles driving over and/or damaging covered bridges and allows cameras to be installed on historic covered bridges to help identify who damages them so they can be held accountable. The Board of Selectmen updated the Town’s ordinance related to covered bridges after a public hearing in September with new fines of up to \$2,000 plus damage expenses effective January 1. The Town is also in the process of installing cameras.



Covered bridges should only be used by passenger vehicles of standard size. Vehicles that are taller than the posted height, weigh more than three tons, or those towing something, must use an alternate route. Only one passenger car at a time should drive over the bridge to limit the total weight on it. Please be patient and drive slowly over the bridges. Everyone can also help educate their neighbors about which vehicles should go over the bridges and which should take an alternate route. Please do your part to preserve these important structures for generations to come.



©Drawing courtesy of Darrin Thorne and the 1983 Old Home Day Committee

Introduction of Human Resources Coordinator

The Town of Swanzey is pleased to announce the hiring of Meagen Kerris as the Town's Human Resources Coordinator, who joined us in September. Ms. Kerris has a strong background in municipal, human resources, and organizational management. She has held the roles of Finance Administrator and Town Administrator in the Town of Deering. Her other roles include Recreation Director and Treasurer for the Town of Frankestown, NH, and serving as Executive Assistant with the New Hampshire Business Finance Authority.

Ms. Kerris stated, "I am honored to assume the role of Human Resources Coordinator for the Town of Swanzey. I look forward to collaborating with the staff, bringing innovative approaches, and providing support. Additionally, I am enthusiastic about making a meaningful contribution to the community."

Town Administrator Michael Branley stated, "Meagen has the combination of municipal and human resources experience that we were looking for in this position. Her background means that she will be an asset to the Town and our employees from day one."



Emergency Management

The Town of Swanzey has two notification systems to send alerts to residents. The first is accessed through our website at www.swanzeynh.gov. At the bottom of the homepage, you will see "Stay Updated With Us". Enter your email address and follow the prompts to receive email and/or text alerts. For the most part, this would be used for non-emergency notifications, though emergency alerts are possible. Through this site, you would get alerted to various topics such as Town Hall office closures, meeting postponements, or other Town related information. These alerts are triggered by the posting and changes made to the website.

The second is NH Alerts, a free emergency, community, and weather alert system through the State of New Hampshire Department of Safety Division of Emergency Services and Communications. Examples of alerts are Criminal Activity, Evacuation Notices, Fires, Floods, or Missing Person cases.

NH Alert Facts:

- Messages are tailored to a specific geographic location, alerting only residents in the affected area.
- Residents may select the types of alerts they would like to receive.
- Alerts are issued by New Hampshire public safety officials.
- Citizens can sign up through ReadyNH.gov and download the app to receive weather alerts.
- Registering for NH Alerts is free and simple.
- The app is available for your smartphone through the App Store or Google Play.
- NH Alerts app users are encouraged to enable their GPS services so the app can deliver location-based multimedia alerts to subscribers within a specific geographic area.



Job Opportunities

Police Department

The Town of Swanzev Police Department is currently accepting applications for our full-time and part-time Police leadership / Supervisor and Police Officer positions.

- Competitive Bonuses
- Competitive Pay
- Competitive Benefits

Fire Department

The Town of Swanzev is actively seeking on-call Firefighters and/or EMTs. This role offers a rewarding experience with the potential for career growth. Responsibilities include responding to emergency calls, extinguishing fires, safeguarding lives and property, operating and maintaining fire equipment and facilities, and other crucial community safety tasks. Serving as an on-call firefighter provides training opportunities and the chance to develop skills necessary for a career in firefighting. While experience and certification are preferred, the fire department is open to training new members.

Qualifications: Call Firefighters must live within Swanzev, hold a high school diploma or equivalent, and possess a valid driver's license. They are also required to pass an NFPA 1582 wellness evaluation successfully. Within 12 months of hire, candidates must complete the State of New Hampshire Firefighter One certification.

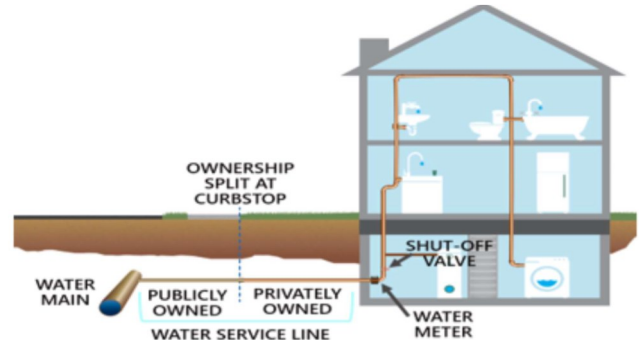
Applications and job descriptions may be picked up at the Swanzev Town Hall or, by contacting Human Resources at mkerris@swanzeynh.gov or 603-352-7411 x113. The Town of Swanzev is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

North Swanzev Water & Fire Precinct

The US Environmental Protection Agency has revised the Lead Copper Rule impacting every national water system, and we are no exception. We were tasked with gathering the data for over 440 service connections that we have.

We have compiled the inventory from the numerous sources we maintain such as service tie cards, customer files, work orders, meter installation records, and our as-built maps of the mains. Thirty-eight (38) services were determined to be Galvanized Requiring Replacement (GRR) that may contain lead components. Seventy (70) services are considered "Unknown" due to lack of information and/or conflicting records. The required mandatory notifications have been mailed or hand delivered.

Follow us on our Facebook page, North Swanzev Water & Fire Precinct, for more updates. Questions or concerns? Call us at 603-352-2338, email sly@ne.rr.com, or stop by the Precinct Office at 31 Walnut Place. — *Sly Karasinski, Superintendent*



Planning and Economic Development

Certified Mail: What Does It Mean?

Have you received a certified letter from the Town Offices? Have no fear! Chances are, one of your neighbors has submitted an application to the Zoning Board of Adjustment or the Planning Board. Land Use boards in New Hampshire have a statutory requirement to notify all applicant abutters of pending applications and associated public hearings. What should you do if you receive a certified letter from the Town? You should collect it, open it, and read it! Receiving notifications keeps you informed of changes that may impact you. Attending public hearings provides you with an opportunity to voice your concerns and ask questions about upcoming projects. Stay informed—collect certified mailings from the Town.

Volunteer Opportunities

The following Town boards, committees, and commissions currently have openings and are seeking new members: Are you passionate about shaping Swanzey's future? **The Zoning Board of Adjustment is urgently seeking dedicated members** to help guide our community's development. As a board member, you'll **influence local development** by evaluating and deciding on land use requests that deviate from the Zoning Ordinance. You'll **gain valuable experience** by attending free, voluntary training sessions to enhance your knowledge and effectiveness in your role. Finally, you'll **make a difference** by voting on important and sometimes controversial matters that directly impact your community. This is your chance to play a crucial role in Swanzey's growth and development. **Apply now to be part of something meaningful!**

The Energy Commission works to advise and make recommendations to Town staff, Boards, Committees, and Commissions on matters of policy pertaining to the study, planning, and utilization of energy resources for municipal buildings and built resources of the Town.

The Rail Trails Advisory Committee is charged with making recommendations to the Board of Selectmen on the options for use, maintenance, fundraising, and other matters, as requested by the Board, for the two rail-trail corridors in Swanzey, namely the Ashuelot Line and the Cheshire Line.

Volunteering with one of these groups is a great opportunity for residents to get more involved in the community and help with making important decisions about the Town's future. More information on these committees, commissions, and boards can be found on the Town's website, including meeting minutes and packets. If you have any questions, please contact Adam Paquette or Stephon Mehu using one of the options at the bottom of this page.

Pre-Application Meetings

Interested in starting a project on your property, but not sure if it will comply with local ordinances and regulations? The Planning and Economic Development Department can help you! Call or email our department and schedule a meeting to discuss your options.

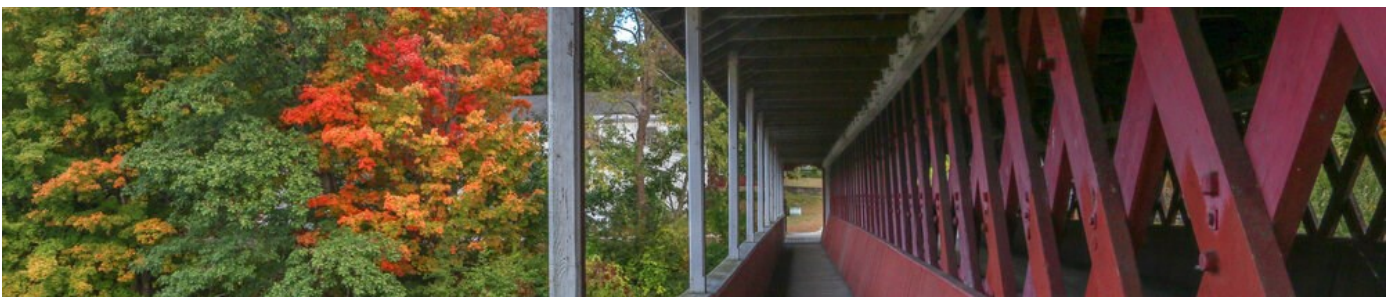
Contact Us

Adam Paquette, Town Planner – apaquette@swanzeynh.gov or 603-352-7411 ext. 112

Stephon Mehu, Assistant Town Planner – smehu@swanzeynh.gov or 603-352-7411 ext. 108

Shared Email: planner@swanzeynh.gov

Continued on next page...



Planning and Economic Development Continued

Project Name	Location	Type of Use	Units / Project Description	Status as of 11/9/2024
SMC	173 Monadnock Highway	Multi-Family	84	Completed
Alotek	Old Homestead Highway	Multi-Family	32	Construction Started
Plane View	115 Old Homestead Highway	Multi-Family	74	Awaiting Groundwork
Flatley	244 Old Homestead Highway	Multi-Family	208	Construction Started
Avanru	10 Perry Lane	Multi-Family	76	Complete & Occupied
Turmoil	735 West Swanzey Road	Commercial	Manufacturing Facility	Awaiting Groundwork
Swanzey West Storage	Tax Map 217 Lot 21	Commercial	Self-Storage Facility	Complete & Occupied
FW Webb	471 Old Homestead Highway	Commercial	Wholesale and Warehouse Industrial Facility	Complete & Occupied
Mt. Caesar School Addition	585 Old Homestead Hwy	School	Mt. Caesar School Construction	Construction Started
Asher Construction	Tax Map 209 Lot 4	Commercial	Contractor Bay Facility	Planning Board Approval
Gridiron Construction	Tax Map 209 Lot 21-1	Commercial	Office and Warehousing	Planning Board Approval



Tax Collector

As Tax Collector, I hear a lot of feedback on the Town's property taxes. Voters have a big say in the Town and School District budgets and, therefore, the taxes we all pay. Many people are under the impression that the Selectmen spend the money. They do have some discretion, but it is very little compared to the overall budget. They can only spend the money the voters approve at Town Meeting. The Town's budget is developed by the Selectmen with input from department heads. The budget is then presented to the voters to approve at Town Meeting, which will take place March 11, 2025.

Prior to Town Meeting, on the first Tuesday in February, is the Deliberative Session, which is February 4 in 2025. Frankly, this is one of the most important meetings during the budget setting process, but is very poorly attended.

What is the Deliberative Session? It is exactly that, a Town Meeting where the budget and other proposals are deliberated and reviewed. Any voters present can make motions to change, add, or remove proposed spending items. Any proposals to be included for the March meeting have to be approved by the majority in attendance at this meeting. The articles that are approved during the Deliberative Session are then presented to voters at Town Meeting.

The largest portion of everyone's tax bill is the school portion. They have a very similar process and their Deliberative Session is usually the first Saturday in February and voting is the same day as the Town Meeting.

Please consider getting involved in this process and have a say in how your tax dollars are spent.



Swansey Fire Department

PO Box 10009 34 Main Street, Swansey, New Hampshire, 03446

603-358-6455



Fire Chief Eric Mattson

Deputy Chief Mike Burke

Assistant Fire Chief Vincent Sanchez,

Deputy Chief Norm Skantze

This has been a busy summer for the Fire Department. With all the EMS and fire calls, we are on track to cover almost 1,100 calls this year. As we start looking at the upcoming cooler weather, homes around town are starting up their wood and pellet stoves. We wish to encourage you to have the chimneys cleaned and inspected before they go into heavy use for winter. And with the winter season comes the snow and ice—be sure to slow down and drive with due regard during these oncoming winter months.

Many of the department members have been involved with the design and implementation of the revised fire station and the Fire Station Advisory Committee (FSAC). As described in the FSAC's article on page 8 in this publication, we believe the design is a properly sized building and is the best use for this lot.

We also have ongoing recruitment and you will start seeing our signs pointing out our need for firefighters and EMTs. Although this is an ongoing problem nationally, we are hopeful that this tactic has a positive outcome for our community. If you are interested, please contact us at 603-358-6455 or email emattson@swanseynh.gov.



Fire Station Advisory Committee Members

General Lead Information

Laws and Regulations Governing the Prevention of Lead Poisoning

A number of State and Federal laws have been passed aimed at preventing lead poisoning. These laws address a variety of lead hazards found in our environment including lead in paint, dust and soil; lead in water; and lead in consumer products. The State of New Hampshire is addressing lead poisoning prevention under these laws in many ways, including issuing and enforcing Orders of Lead Hazard Reduction, testing children for lead, case management for individuals with elevated lead levels, licensing lead professionals, and educating the community to assist them in compliance with the regulations and general lead awareness.

EPA's Renovation, Repair, and Painting Rule

EPA's Lead Renovation, Repair, and Painting Rule (RRP) requires that firms performing renovation, repair, and painting projects that disturb lead-based paint in homes, child care facilities, and pre-schools built before 1978 be certified by the EPA (or an EPA-authorized state.) Use certified renovators who are trained by EPA-approved training providers, and follow lead-safe work practices.

EPA and HUD's Lead-Based Paint Disclosure Rule

This law requires that potential buyers and renters of housing built prior to 1978 receive certain information about lead and lead hazards in the residence prior to becoming obligated to buy or rent, and provides the opportunity for an independent lead inspection for buyers. Sellers, landlords, and agents are responsible for compliance.

HUD's Lead Safe Housing Rule

This regulation was established to protect young children from lead-based paint hazards in housing that is financially assisted by the Federal government or sold by the government. The regulation establishes requirements that control lead-based paint hazards in such housing. It applies only to housing that was built before 1978; in that year, lead-based paint was banned nationwide for consumer use.

Consumer Product Safety Commission — Lead in Consumer Products

The US Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is charged with protecting the public from unreasonable risks of injury or death associated with the use of thousands of types of consumer products.

OSHA's Lead in Construction Standard

Under OSHA's Lead in Construction Standard, employers are required to protect workers from lead exposure. The lead standards establish a permissible exposure limit, set an action level at which an employer must begin specific compliance activities, including blood lead testing for exposed workers. The lead standards also include provisions such as medical surveillance, exposure monitoring, and hygiene facilities and practices that are critical in preventing lead exposure and elevated blood lead levels.

US Food and Drug Administration — Lead in Food

The FDA monitors and regulates levels of lead in certain foods, food wares, dietary supplements, and cosmetics, because of its potential to cause serious health problems.

EPA's Safe Drinking Water Act

The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) was established to protect the quality of drinking water in the U.S. This law focuses on all waters actually or potentially designed for drinking use, whether from above ground or underground sources.

Information courtesy of the Healthy Homes & Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (HHLPPP), leadinfo@dhhs.nh.gov, 603-271-4507. <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/programs-services/environmental-health-and-you/lead-poisoning-prevention-program>. — *Health Department*

Fire Station Advisory Committee

With the understanding that the use of the basement of Town Hall as a fire station is no longer a viable option, the Selectboard appointed the Fire Station Advisory Committee to find a solution that Swanzey residents will approve. Our mandate was to gather information, explore the pros and cons of different locations, decide on the most appropriate design for the building, consider ways to get residents of the town to support our recommendations, and submit a proposal to the Selectboard and the Town by early November for eventual inclusion on the 2025 Warrant.

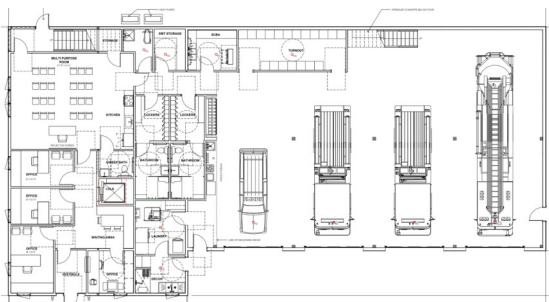
The Committee is made up of Town board and committee members, current and past firefighters, and other concerned residents of the town. Members are: James Ward (Chair), Keith Bell, Cathy Bergstrom, Mike Burke, Robert Derocher, Stacey Goodale, Ken Greatbatch, Jeff Hurt, H. Gregory Johnson, Mark LaBelle, Eric Mattson, Sherry Mattson, Bob Mitchell, Bryan Rudgers, Mark Scalera, Scott Self, Bob Smith, Russell Tenney, and Michael York.

The Committee has reviewed the previous proposal that did not pass in March, visited the three Swanzey fire stations, and also took a tour of the recently built fire station in Westmoreland. By examining the location of fire and emergency calls, the projections of population growth in the town, and the need for adequate fire station coverage of our large town, the Committee accepted the need for three stations. It was decided that we should replace Station #2, currently in the basement of Town Hall, with a new building in the north central area of Swanzey, preferably along Route 32.

The Committee considered several possible sites along Route 32. After consideration of the pros and cons for these sites, the Committee determined that the property at 321 Old Homestead Highway did not require a cost to acquire, was the most ready for construction, and the least expensive site on which to build. This site can also have access to town water, saving the cost of cisterns to store well water for the fire-suppression system the station must have. The size of the property allows for any later expansion that might be needed as well as the space for the construction of outside training structures for firefighters.

In order to reduce the cost of the building, the committee redesigned the building with a smaller footprint and fewer square feet. This change to the previous design allows the station to be located closer to Route 32, reducing site preparation costs. The garage bays were changed so that they open directly toward the highway, reducing the amount of paving necessary. Locker rooms and public areas were made smaller. Open space on the second floor provides space for future expansion, as needed, without major construction. It was also decided to change from metal fabrication to wood-framed construction in search of lower costs. The new station design offers improved space for working on and around the trucks, better ventilation of exhaust, space for the proper decontamination of firefighting equipment, room to accommodate larger trucks, better room for organized storage, and better public access, including handicap access. It is expected that the new station will help with the recruitment of firefighters—a crucial need.

The new design concept for Station #2 has been submitted by an architect and sent to a construction firm for more detailed plans and cost analysis. The Committee will work with the architect to meet the needs of the fire department while minimizing the cost. The Committee has been developing a communication plan to explain the proposal to the Town. Many different forms of communication will be used to reach voters concerning the proposal for a new Station #2. Please check the Swanzey Facebook page and website for updated information.



Swanzy Completes Reassessment in 2024

Like many communities, Swanzy periodically reviews the Town’s improved properties. Additional annual inspections are conducted to review properties that were sold/transferred during the previous year and to verify building permit information and other reported changes to properties.

Every five years, the Town of Swanzy conducts a full reevaluation of property assessments in order to ensure the Town's assessment is equal to fair market value. In 2024, Swanzy updated the assessment values of all real property based on an analysis of real estate sales that took place between April 1, 2022 and March 31, 2024 (the 2021 and 2022 tax years). The next full re-evaluation will take place in 2029, and will be based on real estate sales during the 2027 and 2028 tax years. This helps to prevent any particular category of properties from being over-assessed or under-assessed.

	2024 Acres	2023 Value	2024 Value	Value Increase	Value % Increase
Current Use Land	18,631	\$1,367,256	\$2,073,143	\$705,887	51.6%
Residential Land	5,833	\$163,477,334	\$245,330,414	\$81,853,080	50.1%
Residential Buildings	N/A	\$348,261,343	\$541,058,962	\$192,797,619	55.4%
Commercial/Industrial Land	1,450	\$23,555,318	\$39,462,724	\$15,907,406	67.5%
Commercial/Industrial Buildings	N/A	\$81,880,900	\$129,417,400	\$47,536,500	58.1%
Manufactured Housing	N/A	\$14,853,400	\$33,769,600	\$18,916,200	127.4%
Total Taxable Value		\$644,838,252	\$1,004,420,964	\$359,582,712	55.8%

After the reassessment, the 2024 tax rate was set at \$19.06 as follows:

	2023 Tax Effort	2023	2024 Tax Effort	2024	% Decrease	Appropriation Increase
Town	\$4,869,267	7.55	\$5,170,325	5.16	46.3%	6.2%
County	\$2,340,874	3.63	\$2,486,867	2.47	47.0%	6.2%
Local School	\$8,948,772	13.88	\$10,308,114	10.26	35.3%	15.2%
State School	\$1,130,205	1.81	\$1,144,445	1.17	54.7%	1.3%
Total	\$17,289,118	26.87	\$19,109,751	19.06	41.0%	10.5%
Total in North Swanzy		27.48		19.45	41.3%	

Proposed Purchase of West Swanzy Water Company

After several years of study and analysis, the 2025 Town Warrant will include an article authorizing the Town to purchase and improve the West Swanzy Water Company (WSWC). The WSWC is a private utility that serves the area around the Homestead Woolen Mill and Route 10. The Town received a grant to hire Underwood Engineers to assess the system and to recommend improvements, including a new pump house and a storage tank. Low interest loans and grants have been awarded to help lower the total cost of the project, with more grants still being pursued. Why would the Town purchase the WSWC? A few reasons are:

- To have Town ownership of wells with access to one of the best water aquifers in the region to help protect the resource.
- To ensure the system is managed effectively for the users of the system, providing reliable water.
- To improve and expand the water distribution system, especially for fire suppression, allowing continued economic development in the Route 10 area.

If the voters approve the purchase, expenses for the water system will be accounted for in an enterprise fund like the Town’s sewer system, with the majority of the costs paid by the users. More information and the Underwood Engineers Report can be found at www.swanzeynh.gov.

Mt. Caesar Union Library Fall Into Winter Happenings

After the big structural project of last winter/spring, we are up and running with programming again. Come join in! All programs are held in the 2nd floor meeting room. Sadly, the meeting room is still only accessible via stairs as we have no elevator yet; that's in Phase II which is to come. If you haven't been in since the project, come see the beautiful original flooring which was revealed. We're the same—but better!

Youth Activities

- ◇ **Preschool Storytime**—Thursdays, weekly, 10:30 am
- ◇ **Stay & Play** (for infants & toddlers)—Mondays, weekly, 10:30 am (moving to Tuesdays in 2025)
- ◇ **Music & Movement** w/ Kim Wallach—2nd Tuesdays, monthly, 10:30 am
- ◇ **Youth Writing Group** (age 11+)—1st & 3rd Saturdays, 12:45 pm
- ◇ **Homeschool Family Meetup**—Tuesdays, weekly, 1:30 pm
- ◇ **Teen Book Club**—1st Thursdays, monthly, 3:00 pm

Adult and All-Ages Activities

- ◇ **MCUL Book Club**—1st Mondays, monthly, 12:30 pm
- ◇ **Knitting Group**—1st & 3rd Wednesdays, 6:30 pm
- ◇ **Family Movie Night**—most months, on a weekend night
- ◇ **Family Holiday Movie Night**—Friday, 12/13/24, 6:30 pm (co-sponsored with Stratton Free Library)

* Please note that some items on the schedule may shift in January 2025; contact us with any questions.

Coming Soon: The square grand piano on the second floor landing has been tuned and we hope to have a silent movie show with piano accompaniment this winter; date to be announced.

Hours: Mon 10—4 ~ Tue 10—5 ~ Wed 2—8 ~ Thu 10—5 ~ Sat 10—2
Mt. Caesar Union Library ~ 628 Old Homestead Highway ~ Swanzey, NH 03446
603-357-0456 ~ mcuibrary@yahoo.com ~ mtcaesarunionlibrary.weebly.com



Stratton Free Library

The time has finally arrived. After many years, the Stratton Free Library is computerized! We have converted our old-style card catalog to a digital one and barcoded over 10,000 books! Next, we will be asking all of our patrons to come in to the library to update their information and get a new barcoded library card. What does all of this mean for our patrons? They will be able to see what they have checked out, place reserves, renew books, and search our catalog—all from their home computer or mobile device. Patrons will be able to receive reminders that books are due or that reserves are in via text or email. This is a very exciting time for us and we ask for your patience as we all learn the new system. Please know that Carol, Molly, and I will still be here to help you, in person, as always.

We are excited to partner up with the Mt. Caesar Union Library on December 13 at 6:30 pm for a family movie night. Join us at the Mt. Caesar Library for Dr. Seuss' "*The Grinch*." Movie night is free and open to the public. There will be popcorn and a drink for \$1.00.

We continue to offer password free Wi-Fi that extends out to the curb. Come checkout a novel, explore the New Hampshire shelf, make a craft, read, or play in the children's section. Use your library card to access e-books and audio books through the State Library. Come in to admire the architecture, the beautiful paintings of Lucy Ladd Stratton or peek through the front door keyhole for a surprise. May the coming year bring you health, happiness, and to the library. We would love to see you. —Becky Streeter, Director

Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:30 - 7:00, Fridays and Saturdays 10 :00 am– 2:00 pm
Stratton Free Library ~ 9 Main Street ~ Swanzey, NH 03469 ~ 603 352-9391 ~ strattonfreelibrary@ne.rr.com
Library Catalog: <https://strattonfreelnh.booksys.net/opac/sfl/index.html>

Golden Rod Grange # 114

The Golden Rod Grange Hall's renovation and restoration are moving forward. In October, the frame and trusses of the old roof were replaced, and a new roof was installed. The interior ceiling on the second level needed to be removed, and a new replacement is slated for completion. This significant renovation is due to the generosity of the townspeople, who approved a Warrant article in 2024.



For the last three years, the Swanzey Preservation Society (SPS) has undertaken several fundraisers, including yard sales, book sales, and a traditional New England bean supper of hot dogs, homemade baked beans, coleslaw, brownies with ice cream, and a choice of beverage. The Bluegrass Festival was great fun, showcasing well-known New England bands enhanced by the audience's active participation. All who attended enjoyed a delicious lunch.

Our Senior Coffee Connections program, held every Wednesday at the grange from 9:00-11:00 am, continues to see an increase in the number of seniors attending. The program launched when local seniors were interested in gathering regularly each week. Various presenters at Coffee Connections have included Town employees describing their job roles and disseminating information on accessing Town services, safety in the home, and internet awareness. Area business owners and local artists and craftsmen showcase their talents. Although Coffee Connections has moved to the Swanzey Congregational Church for the winter, due to the lack of heat at the Grange, it will return to the Grange in the spring. We stay connected over the winter with a four-month newsletter series distributed via email and post. Our website is linked to the Town's website.

Fundraising for the Golden Rod Grange continues with strong support from private donations, volunteers, and in-kind donations. Many non-profits in our community support the efforts to renovate and restore the building. The Old Homestead Garden Club has held a greens sale and a mum sale at the Grange. The sales are fundraisers for two club scholarships that benefit high school students.

The Golden Rod Grange Advisory Committee and the Swanzey Preservation Society (SPS) have successfully received many donations from local charitable foundations including a grant from the NH Preservation Alliance, which was used to cover the cost of a historical building assessment. This assessment validated that the building was worthy of being saved. A more recent grant from More Than A Thrift Store, in Keene, is being utilized to cover the operating expenses for the Senior Coffee Connections program. An application was completed in July for a Moose Plate Grant, from the NH Preservation Alliance, and will be used toward the restoration of the building's twenty-eight windows. The grant will cover the cost of the restoration of twenty windows, with the remaining windows still needing to be restored. A plan for the restoration of the remaining windows will be through fundraising and volunteer workshops.

As we proceed with our fundraising for 2024-2025 and subsequent years, the work that has been started must continue with the support of the Town, private donors, and fundraising. Town stewardship of the building is vital to the preservation of this historic building's legacy as a community landmark. All monies allocated to this worthwhile project demonstrate to private donors, charitable grant foundations, and volunteers that we are committed to preserving the Golden Rod Grange Hall.

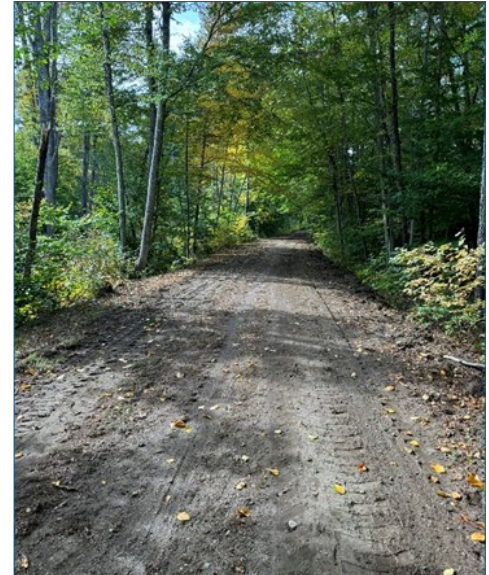
Golden Rod Grange Town Advisory Committee — Norman Skantzze, Eileen Longe, Linda Minickiello, Lillian Chirichella (Swanzey Preservation Society Members).

Rail Trail Advisory Committee

The Rail Trail Advisory Committee (RTAC) continues work on improving and maintaining both the Ashuelot Trail and the Cheshire Trail. The RTAC is in need of one member. If you are interested in joining or volunteering to help maintain the trails, please contact Mike Kowalczyk at mkowalczyk1958@gmail.com.

Ashuelot Rail Trail

- The trail was mowed throughout the Town for a total of ~7.5 miles.
- The section of trail in Westport, from the south Holbrook Road crossing to Route 10, was graded.
- Decking boards and running boards on the Ash Brook Swamp Bridge were replaced thanks to the Keene Sno-Riders.
- The two most northern washouts from the July 2023 floods are scheduled to be fixed before the end of the year.
- Discussions are ongoing with NHDOT, NHBOT, and the Town of Swanzey regarding fixing the remaining five washouts from the July 2023 floods.
- The Town has submitted a MAST grant application requesting that flashing pedestrian crossings be installed, one each at the three Matthews Road crossings.



Ashuelot Rail Trail—Westport Section



Cheshire Rail Trail, Mt. Huggins Parking

Cheshire Rail Trail

- The trail was mowed throughout the Town for a total of ~3.5 miles.
- All the drainage ditches on the entire length of the trail in Swanzey were cleared, as well as removing standing dead trees.
- The Swanzey DPW graciously fixed a flooding issue located at the Mt. Huggins Drive north gate. At some time in the past, water off of Mt. Huggins was re-routed, flooding the rail trail. The DPW installed two culverts to alleviate the issue. The crew also leveled, graded, and resurfaced the parking area expanding the parking capacity.
- The Town was awarded the RTP grant and the objective is to grade, level, fill, and apply final hardpack surface material on the Cheshire Rail Trail from Joslin Station Road to the Swanzey/Marlborough town line.



Ashuelot Rail Trail—Westport Section

Conservation Commission – Swanzey Outdoors

Moosewood Ecological, LLC spent the summer and fall studying Swanzey's swamps, marshes, vernal pools, and wooded wetlands. They identified the most significant wetlands in Town for functions like flood control and groundwater recharge, as well as wildlife habitat. Swanzey's Wetlands Evaluation is now complete, and we also have a final copy of the Town's Natural Resources Audit of our ordinances and regulations—they will be available on the Conservation Committee page on the Town's website. With what we have learned, the Conservation Commission is now working with the Planning Board to update our Wetland Conservation District ordinance to better protect our Town's wetlands and all they do for us. Keep an eye out for public hearings and potential warrant items.

We had a booth at Old Home Day in July to talk about Swanzey's wetlands, with some furs of wetland mammals on display (loaned from NH Fish & Game), and gave away some native Joe Pye-Weed for wet garden areas. On August 27, the Conservation Commission and Moosewood Ecological hosted 40 people on a field trip to the wetlands at the Dillant-Hopkins Airport.



Airport Director David Hickling has been talking with both Swanzey and Keene Conservation Commissions about the airport's plans to complete fencing to keep deer and other wildlife off runways. All agree that the best solution is to keep fences closer to runways (rather than along the road), to allow better access to the large wetlands for wildlife and wildlife-watchers. The fence will be impacting some of the wetlands, and will require State permits. The airport is also seeking grant funding for construction.

The Mt. Cresson timber harvest is now complete. The total area of Town forest selectively harvested was 110 acres, with almost 406,000 board feet of timber sold; 85% of that volume was white pine and hemlock, which had grown in thickly, leaving little undergrowth. The harvest will open up the forest more, allowing other tree and shrub species to regenerate and provide more food and habitat for wildlife. Using the proceeds, the Conservation Commission is working with Meadowsend to lay out a new hiking trail loop for the public to enjoy—we expect it will be ready sometime in 2025.

We welcome our newest member, Bonnie Hart!

Swanzey Lake Watershed Management Project

FB Environmental presented their final Swanzey Lake Watershed-Based Management Plan at the Swanzey Lake Protective Association's annual meeting on July 20. The plan is now available on the Conservation Commission's page on the Town website to view. The Swanzey Lake plan work group is now meeting monthly through the winter to find ways to implement the plan's recommendations. We'll be researching and applying for grants (like the 319 Grant next August) and looking for ways to help landowners in the watershed tackle erosion problems and replace old septic systems, among other things.

Police Department

Statistics

A review of our statistics below show a downward trend of “Calls for Service”, “Citations”, and “Incidents” reports. This trend would be related to a reduction of staffing. Many “Calls for Service” are self-initiated by the officers and occasionally results in “Citations” and “Incident” reports. There are no significant upward trends within the statistics.


Statistics	Five Months	Seven Months	Five Months
	Jun 2023 – Oct 2023	Nov 2023 – May 2024	June 2024 – Oct 2024
Calls for service	5,073	5,855	3,767
Citations	852	843	535
Field Interviews	613	714	619
Accidents	34	87	48
Incidents	277	324	218
Arrests/Bookings	94	84	75
Registrants	19	41	17
Warrants	14	6	8

Personnel

- Officer Richard O’Leary will be graduating the New Hampshire Police Academy on November 15, 2024. Officer O’Leary will start his Field Training upon his return to the Police Department.
- Officer Charles Johnson, who held the position of School Resource Officer (SRO), resigned to pursue other ventures. We wish him well.
- Officer Mary Wilson transferred to Marlborough Police Department. We wish her well.

Events

- In June, officers completed firearms training to convert from .40 caliber pistols to new 9mm caliber pistols with laser sights and qualified with their new firearms.
- The Northlands music festival on June 14 and 15 had no significant events.

<p>The AFIS Live Scan for fingerprinting arrived at the police station in June and was placed in the booking room. The AFIS Livescan fingerprinting machine is connected to the State and the FBI. We can now electronically transmit fingerprints to the State and to the FBI.</p>	
---	---

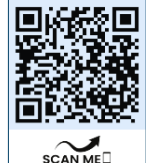
- Chief Gonsalves and Town Administrator, Mr. Branley, held a meeting in July with Mr. Jeremy Rathbun, the Superintendent of the Monadnock Regional School District, and Janel Morin, the school district Business Administrator, to discuss the School Resource Officer (SRO) position. Chief Gonsalves informed Mr. Rathbun that the Police Department could not support the SRO position in September due to staffing issues, but could revisit the topic in the future once staffing can support it. Mr. Rathbun provided his strong support for the SRO position.
- Chief Gonsalves met with school officials, Jeremy Rathbun, Superintendent of the Monadnock Regional School District; Melissa Suarez, Mt. Caesar’s principal; Janel Morin, Business Administrator of the Monadnock Regional School; the construction site supervisor at Mt. Caesar; and a supervisor for First Student school buses in August at Mt. Caesar School to review the traffic plan for parents and school buses at Mt. Caesar.

Continued on next page...

Police Department Continued

- We have outfitted the officers with new field uniforms that are more comfortable for everyday use.
- The Swanzev Police Department assisted with traffic for the Swanzev Covered Bridges half marathon, Elijah's Race, on Sunday, September 1.
- The Swanzev Police Department assisted with traffic on Old Homestead Highway for the Monadnock Regional School District homecoming parade on September 28.

The Swanzev Police Department and the Human Resources Coordinator participated in a hiring expo in Nashua, NH, on October 16. We are presently hiring and looking for qualified people.



The Swanzev Police Department participated in the Recreation Department's 6th Annual Halloween Block Party at Brown Memorial Field on October 26.



Winter Information

- RSA 41:11— A friendly reminder to residents and visitors that the winter parking ban will go into effect on November 15. From November 15 to April 15, all motor vehicles parked on any street or highway between 11:00 pm and 7:00 am or hindering snow removal operations will be towed at the owner's expense.
- Please do not crowd a snow plow or travel beside it. Snowplows travel slowly, make wide turns, stop often, overlap lanes, and exit the road frequently. However, the road behind an active snowplow is safer to drive on. If you find yourself behind a snowplow, stay behind it or use caution when passing.



Prepare Your Car for Winter

- Test your battery; battery power drops as the temperature drops.
- Make sure the cooling system is in good working order.
- Have winter tires with a deeper, more flexible tread put on your car.
- If using all-season tires, check the tread and replace if less than 2/32 of an inch.
- Check the tire pressure; tire pressure drops as the temperature drops.
- Check your wiper blades and replace, if needed.
- Add wiper fluid rated for -30 degrees.
- Keep your gas tank at least half full to avoid gas line freeze.



I would like to thank the people of Swanzev for their support and encourage anyone who sees or hears something unusual or suspicious to not hesitate to call the police. Working together, we can keep this great community a safe place to live.

Finally, I would like to recognize everyone in the Police Department for their dedication and professionalism. Thank you.

We, the members of the Swanzev Police Department, with the cooperation of our community, strive to improve the quality of life for all, by upholding laws, protecting lives and property, and providing a safe and secure environment. Integrity/Compassion/Fairness.

Recreation Department

Winter Basketball Program

Registration closes on December 16 for our six-week basketball program held at Cutler Elementary School from January 7 until February 15. Our Skills and Drills program is for players in grades PreK-1st grade as an introduction to basketball skills and basics. Practices are held on Saturday mornings. Our Hot Shots program is for players in 2nd and 3rd grade. This program meets on Wednesdays for practices, and Saturday mornings for scrimmages to introduce the players to basic game play and rules. For our 4th-6th graders, we are offering our Basketball League, which meets on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays for practices and games. Players in our Basketball League will also be invited to play in the Youth Basketball Jamboree with Keene Parks & Recreation and Peterborough Recreation teams on Saturday, February 15.

Volunteer Basketball Coaches Needed!

Calling all basketball enthusiasts! Make a difference in young lives by being a volunteer basketball coach for all levels of our Winter Basketball League. We're looking for passionate individuals to help young players develop their skills and love for the game. No prior coaching experience necessary! This is a great opportunity for high school students looking for volunteer hours. Head coaches receive one FREE player registration and assistant coaches receive 50% player credit. For more information, please email recreation@swanzeynh.gov.

10th Annual A Very Swanzey Christmas - Saturday, December 7

Join us on Saturday, December 7, from 4:00 pm to 6:30 pm for the 10th Annual A Very Swanzey Christmas at Whitcomb Hall, 17 Main Street. There will be a bonfire, writing letters to Santa, reindeer food making, a reading of *"Twas the Night Before Christmas,"* cookies, hot chocolate, and a basket raffle by the Swanzey PTO. Finally—at 5:00 pm—Santa will arrive with the help of the Swanzey Fire Department to join us for lighting our tree. He will then head upstairs for photos with Santa.

5th Annual Swanzey Festival of Lights - December 7 - 27

Does your house have an amazing holiday light display? Register by December 1 to participate in one of the biggest tours of holiday light displays in Southwestern NH! Maps will be available beginning Friday, December 6, online and at the Town Hall. Community viewing will run through the 27th, with community voting for the Most Festive Holiday Display the 16th through the 23rd. The top three displays will be announced on the 24th. First place will receive a \$50 gift card, second place will receive a \$30 gift card, and third place will receive a \$20 gift card from local restaurants.

Annual Wilson Pond Family Ice Fishing Derby - Saturday, January 18

Join us for a great family day of fishing at Wilson Pond on Saturday, January 18. This wonderful event is co-hosted by the Connecticut River Sportsman's Club. Fingers crossed that Mother Nature cooperates this year and we have ice! More information to come.

Upcoming Events

- Summer Camp Registration opens March 1. More information will be announced in February on social media and the Town website.
- The Annual Easter Egg Hunt will be on Saturday, April 19.
- Sweep Up Swanzey will be in April.
- The Town Wide Yard Sale will take place in May.

Continued on next page...

Recreation Department *Continued*

Seasonal Employment Opportunities with the Recreation Department

We are looking to fill the following seasonal positions in 2025:

- Kickball Coordinator (six-week program May & June)
- Facility Maintenance (April - October)
- Summer Camp & CIT Counselors / Lifeguards (June 16 - August 22)
- Public Beach Lifeguards (Memorial Day to Labor Day)
- Beach Attendants (Memorial Day to Labor Day)

To apply, email Meagen at mkerris@swanzeynh.gov or visit Town Hall.

Sponsors Needed!


Calling all local businesses! We need your help to continue to make our programs and community events a great and affordable experience for all! If you own a local business and are interested in sponsoring a sports team, community event, or a Swanzey Lake camper, please reach out to Ashlee at recreation@swanzeynh.gov. All sponsorships are tax deductible and a great way to get your business name out in the community!



SPRING KICKBALL LEAGUE

6 WEEK MIXED AGE KICKBALL LEAGUE
BROWN MEMORIAL FIELD
TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS @ 5:30PM
KINDERGARTEN - 6TH GRADE
APRIL 29TH - JUNE 5TH
\$30 - RESIDENTS
\$40 - NON-RESIDENTS

THIS PROGRAM IS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE OLDER PARTICIPANTS THE OPPORTUNITY TO HELP EDUCATE AND TEACH YOUNGER PARTICIPANT. WHILE THE YOUNGER PARTICIPANTS RECEIVE POSITIVE GUIDANCE FROM AN OLDER FRIEND



RECREATION DEPARTMENT

SWANZEY REC SCHOOL'S OUT PROGRAM

Join our wonderful summer camp counselors for fun filled days of games, activities, arts and crafts and wonderful memories on days SAU 93 is closed
Held at the Swanzey Community House
18 Old Richmond Road

www.swanzeynh.myrec.com

Before Care 7:30 - 8:00
Program Day 8:00 - 4:00
After Care 4:00 - 5:00
Sibling Discount
Kindergarten - 6th grade

Resident Rate
Before Care: \$5
Program Day: \$25 / Additional Siblings: \$15
After Care: \$10

Non Resident Rate
Before Care: \$7
Program Day: \$30 / Additional Siblings: \$20
After Care: \$13

REGISTER NOW

Upcoming Dates & Location

Monday 12/23	Tuesday 12/31
Tuesday 12/24	Thursday 1/2
Thursday 12/26	Friday 1/3
Friday 12/27	Monday 1/20
Monday 12/30	Friday 2/7

NOT A SCHOOL SPONSORED ACTIVITY



Energy Commission

Eversource has requested from the state a distribution rate increase of \$182 million over two years, which would increase the average residential bill by nearly 17 percent. The N.H. Public Utilities Commission received the request and has until August 2025 to render a decision. The Swanzey Energy Commission will be exploring ways to lessen the impact on its residents, working with other organizations such as Clean Energy NH and the Monadnock Sustainability Hub.

The Energy Commission is in the process of reviewing a solar project for our municipal needs that could match the benefits of the solar project at the West Swanzey Wastewater Treatment Plant voters approved earlier this year at Town Meeting. That project will be completed with minimal investment from the Town and that investment will pay for itself within the first seven years of the array's expected 20-year lifespan.

The Energy Commission is also keeping its eye on a proposal to bring a 5-megawatt solar array to Dillant Hopkins Airport. This project is being presented by Revision Energy on behalf of the City of Keene, which will be taking 1 megawatt with the other 4 megawatts available to municipalities and non-profit organizations such as schools.

The Energy Commission is an ad hoc commission that was formed when the Community Power Commission wrapped up its work. The Swanzey Community Power plan set the rate through December 2025 at 11.1 cents for

Continued on next page ...

Energy Commission Continued

basic power and 13.9 cents for 100 percent renewable, with two packages between. Currently, the Eversource rate through January 2025 is 10.403 cents a kilowatt hour. Swanze residents are free to change plans at any time without cost.

The Swanze Energy Commission currently has several openings, so if you are a Swanze resident who is interested or has knowledge about the following topics you might be a great fit: weatherization, renewable power, local sustainable energy supply, or community/municipal solar. Contact the Planning Department at planner@swanzeynh.gov if you are interested.

If you'd like to stay informed on energy issues in the town of Swanze and around the region, or if you have expertise you'd like to share, citizen participation is welcome at the Energy Commission meetings on the second Monday of each month at 1:00 pm at Whitcomb Hall. Sometimes meeting times change. To learn more, visit the town website and click on Energy Commission.



Recycling Center

The Summer of 2024 had been very busy. The Swanze Recycling Center is a permit-by-notification, DES Permitted facility that started operating as an active landfill in the early 1900s and ceased being used as a municipal waste dump in 1974. The facility currently operates as a permit required facility with mandatory recycling open to Swanze residents only. The facility handles an average of 2,000 tons per year between material disposal, a very strong and successful material recycling program, and organics.

Warnings

- There is a limit of 10 gallons of household hazardous waste per vehicle.
- Flammable or reactive household chemicals can release toxic fumes or even explode if they are mixed in the trash, causing fires or injuries. Dumping solvents into septic systems or landfills may contaminate ground and surface waters, ruining drinking water and killing fish and wildlife. Pesticides can damage sewage treatment plants, and oil poured into storm drains can flow directly into streams and ponds.

Composting

Composting at home is a valuable commodity that can be used in many ways while saving space in landfills and building healthy soil. Some common uses of compost are mixing into flower or vegetable gardens to replenish nutrients naturally, improve lawns, and improve soil health. Compost is made of nitrogen rich materials and carbon rich materials such as fruit and vegetable scraps, coffee grounds, eggshells, leaves, grass clippings, wood chips, and small twigs, etc.

Ways to Help

- Pre-sort recyclables.
- No trash or caps on bottles.
- Breakdown cardboard boxes.
- Greasy pizza boxes are trash.
- Wrapping paper and tissue paper are trash.
- Drop off fees can be paid with cash or check. Please ask for a receipt.



For more information or to set up a tour please contact jwhipple@swanzeynh.gov or call 603-338-0339.

Department of Public Works

The Summer of 2024 has been very busy for the Department of Public Works. In addition to the annual maintenance work, such as grading, ditching, and roadside mowing, the following projects were successfully completed:

- The Class V gravel portion of Oliver Hill Road had all the drainage pipes replaced and the road was paved.
- A 1,200 foot portion of the gravel road on Cobble Hill Road was widened, new drainage ditches and culverts were installed, and the road was paved.
- The following roads were paved this year: Oliver Hill Road, Taft Road, Aldrich Road, lower Safford Drive, and the above-mention portion of Cobble Hill Road. A section of Whitcomb Road is also scheduled to be paved this year.
- The Upper Wilson Pond Dam was reconstructed by Gordon Services as designed by Dubois and King.
- The Town contracted with Cold River Bridge, LLC to address some deficiencies with the bridge on Denman Thompson Highway over the Ashuelot River. A routine NH Department of Transportation inspection determined that the deck needed repairs and the expansion joint needed to be replaced. This proactive maintenance and repair will preserve the integrity and life span of the bridge. This work was successfully completed, and the bridge was opened back up in September.
- The crew continued to cleanup and make drainage improvements after the 2023 floods. The work consisted of ditching and armor banking of slopes on Winch Hill Road, ditching and armor banking a large portion of East Shore Road's drainage ditches, and ditching and clearing of obstructed culverts on Matthews Road.
- A parking area was constructed for the Rail Trail on Mt. Huggins Drive and drainage improvements were made to a portion of the trail.
- The Webber Hill slope stabilization project started, but there has been a pause in the work due to a design change to combat unstable materials discovered during excavation.
- A project has started at Town Hall to install a new American Disabilities Act (ADA) entrance and access ramp. As part of this project, there will be foundation repairs, drainage improvements to the front of Town Hall, and a failing retaining wall will be replaced.
- The Town utilized grant funds to purchase the property adjacent to the DPW Facility at 110 Pine Street. The purchase was part of a plan to construct a new DPW Facility. The property has been cleared and some grading has occurred. The soil on the property consists of granular sand and the grading of the property will create a significant surplus, which will be used as road sand (for numerous years) and will eliminate the need for the Town to purchase road sand.

The Building and Grounds Maintenance Crew were also very busy with taking care of the buildings and grounds at the Town Hall, Police Station, Fire Stations, Richardson Park, the baseball fields, and cemeteries. Fall cleanup of all Town properties is ongoing on a daily basis.

As we all work on fall cleanup of leaves and debris from our properties, please remember that driveway culverts are the property owner's responsibility. Leaves are not to be discarded in the drainage ditches and culvert inlets and outlets need to be cleaned. Failure to do this can result in damage to driveways and the roads.



Upper Wilson Pond Dam



TOWN OF SWANZEY
 620 OLD HOMESTEAD HIGHWAY
 P.O. BOX 10009
 SWANZEY , NH 03446
 WWW.SWANZEYNH.GOV

PRSR. STD.
 PAID
 Swanzey, NH
 Permit #11
 ECRWSS

Postal Patron
 Swanzey, NH 03431

Important Deadlines for 2025
 Deferral Applications: March 1 — Credits & Exemption Applications: April 15
 Property Abatement Applications: March 1 — Current Use Applications: April 15

Upcoming Important Events 2025

JAN 15 2025	Budget & Bond Public Hearing 6:00 pm Whitcomb Hall, 17 Main Street
FEB 4 2025	Town Deliberative Session 7:00 pm Whitcomb Hall, 17 Main Street
MAR 11 2025	Town & School Election 8:00 am - 7:00 pm Monadnock Regional High School Gym

New Swanzey Town Hall Hours in 2025
 Effective January 1, 2025, Swanzey Town Hall’s open hours to the public will be as follows:

Town Clerk’s Office:
Monday, Tuesday and Thursday
 8:00 am - 4:30 pm
Wednesday
 9:00 am – 7:00 pm
Friday
 7:30 am – 12:00 pm

All other Town Hall Offices:
Monday – Thursday
 8:00 am to 5:00 pm
Friday
 8:00 am to 12:00 pm