Webster Town Board

January 22, 2026

A workshop meeting of the Webster Town Board was called to order by Supervisor Scialdone at 6:45 p.m. at the Webster Town Board Meeting Room, 1002 Ridge Road, Webster, New York, with the following officials present:

Supervisor.....Alexander B. Scialdone
Councilman.....John J. Cahill
Councilwoman.....Jennifer S. Wright
Councilman.....Nicholas E. Hunter
Councilman.....Garrett J. Wagner
Attorney for the Town.....Kyle Taylor
Town Clerk.....Danene M. Marr

Department Heads Present:
Highway Superintendent.....Pat Stephens

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Pat Stephens, Highway Superintendent, appeared before the Town Board to present the Salt Barn/Wash Station process, timeline, estimated costs and bid results.

Bids for construction were issued in late November of 2025 and received on December 10, 2025. Mr. Stephens discussed how those bids compared to earlier cost estimates, along with the reasons the project needs to move forward now. A structural engineering review concluded that further repairs to the existing salt barn would be cost-prohibitive and that its continued operation beyond the current winter season is uncertain.

The existing salt barn, built more than 40 years ago when the Town was significantly smaller, can only store about half of the Town's annual salt usage. As Webster has grown, salt needs have increased, forcing reliance on wintertime deliveries. This dependence is risky given recurring regional salt shortages. Mr. Stephens noted recent reports from Monroe County Highway Superintendents of delayed deliveries, signaling that shortages are again becoming a reality. Limited on-site storage combined with supply disruptions poses a serious risk to road safety if the Town cannot adequately treat roads during storms.

Delaying or downsizing the project would introduce additional engineering costs, reduce operational efficiency, and increase overall expenses. Waiting until a major structural failure occurs would also create safety risks for staff and residents and require emergency construction, which typically results in significantly higher costs due to premium contractor pricing and limited availability. Photographs from the previous winter illustrated how low salt inventories became, at times leaving insufficient material for a full Townwide salting run, narrowly avoiding service disruptions.

The presentation outlined several cost-saving measures evaluated after bids were received. Some value-engineering items were recommended, such as credits related to rock excavation allowances, scheduling work to avoid winter construction conditions, changes to fascia materials, eliminating specialty railing paint, and self-performing portions of paving and earthwork using Town crews. Other potential savings—such as eliminating bonding or insurance, switching from

a metal roof to shingles or replacing concrete push walls with wood—were not recommended due to concerns about long-term durability, safety, and risk. The decision to retain concrete push walls was supported by examples of deterioration and repairs already required on existing wooden structures.

Significant funding offsets were identified. The Town plans to self-perform site work, saving an estimated $530,000. State CHIPS funding can be applied to the project, and the Town has sufficient surplus to help offset costs. Most notably, the Town was awarded a $600,000 Water Quality Improvement Grant tied to covered salt storage and the proposed truck washout, which helps bring the facility into compliance with EPA and MS4 standards. This grant is relatively rare for replacement facilities and reflects the Town's demonstrated commitment to environmental compliance. Mr. Stephens emphasized that failing to use awarded grant funds could negatively affect future grant applications.

Updated budget figures showed that construction bids came in roughly $350,000 under the prior estimate, and adjustments to contingencies further reduced projected costs. While some anticipated savings were lower than initially expected, the overall project cost remained slightly below the most recent estimate discussed with the Board. When combined with earlier phases of highway facility improvements, allocated funds, identified savings, and grant funding, the total projected cost for all facility upgrades is just under $26 million—approximately $2.3 million below the $28.25 million bond authorization.

The presentation concluded with photos illustrating current winter operations, including trucks preloaded with salt and stored indoors for rapid deployment, as well as treated versus untreated salt stockpiles. Mr. Stephens outlined next steps like awarding the bids and proceeding with construction while remaining under budget.

After some general discussion with the Board, Mr. Stephens clarified project oversight and scheduling for the salt storage facility replacement. Limited construction management will be funded through the incidental budget and used mainly for administrative tasks such as documentation, while day-to-day management will be handled internally. A consultant familiar with the project and the bidding process will likely be used. Although the start date has shifted slightly after bidding, the project is still expected to be completed before the next winter season, with a target of finishing by November.

Board members questioned the relatively low contingency percentage. Mr. Stephens explained that the project involves fewer unknowns because it will be built on the footprint of an existing structure, reducing risk. In addition, the Town's plan to self-perform portions of the site work provides financial flexibility. If needed, some paving or related work could be phased or delayed without affecting the core construction, effectively serving as an additional safeguard against budget issues.

A major focus of the discussion was the comparison between concrete and wood push walls. While using wood would save approximately $170,000, Mr. Stephens emphasized that concrete offers significantly greater durability, particularly against impacts from loaders and daily operational wear. Although it is difficult to assign exact life expectancies without a full wood design, existing wooden walls—installed in the 1980s—are now fragile and require ongoing repairs, whereas concrete is expected to better withstand long-term use.

Maintenance and material concerns were also addressed. Recent maintenance on the existing wooden structure has averaged about $2,500 per year, with a major roof replacement costing over $50,000 about a decade ago. Concrete walls would require minimal upkeep, mainly periodic sealing at a relatively low cost. Mr. Stephens assured the Board that if a wood alternative were considered, material specifications would be reviewed and approved by the design team to prevent the use of inferior materials.

Insurance, structural risk, and long-term financial considerations reinforced the conclusion that the project is a necessity rather than a discretionary upgrade. A structural assessment has identified major deficiencies in the existing building, making it effectively uninsurable for failure due to deterioration, with any potential coverage far below replacement costs. The Board also discussed whether enhanced fireproofing could allow for longer-term bonding and insurance savings, and Mr. Stephens agreed to explore those options further before moving ahead.

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There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:17 p.m.

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Danene M. Marr, Town Clerk