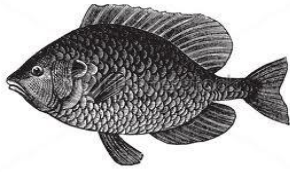


# WASTEWATER FACILITY PLAN PUBLIC HEARING MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday May 13, 2026 @ 5:00 P.M.

Webster Community Center

7411 Main Street West, Webster, WI



**VILLAGE OF WEBSTER**

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- I. **CALL TO ORDER** –President Dedman called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. Dedman noted that members of the public were required to sign in and that any public comments would be limited to three (3) minutes per speaker.

Attendance: Jacob Novitch and Teresa Anderson -MSA; Russ Burford-Village Resident; Greg Marsten-Burnett County Sentinel; Village President, Ed Dedman, Village Trustees, Tom Armstrong; Kelsey Gustafson (arrived 5:26 p.m.); Tim Maloney (arrived 5:15 p.m.); Jeff Roberts and Sue Weis. Village Public Works Director, Pete Denn; Village Clerk/Treasurer, Debra Doriott-Kuhnly; Chad Wek-WACC (arrived 5:20 p.m.) Absent: Trustee, Bill Summer.

- II. **PUBLIC HEARING – CONSIDER THE CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF A WASTEWATER FACILITY PLAN** - Dedman turned the presentation over to Jacob Novitch, Wastewater Engineer with MSA, and Teresa Anderson, also of MSA, to lead the public hearing.

### Existing Treatment Infrastructure

Jacob provided an overview of the Village's existing wastewater infrastructure. He explained that wastewater is collected through a gravity sewer system and four lift stations, then conveyed to the treatment facility via the main lift station located at the corner of Muskey Avenue and Alder Street. The treatment facility, located southeast of town, is a stabilization pond system consisting of two original ponds constructed in 1960 and a third pond added in 1990. The system operates as a seasonal discharge system, permitted to discharge to the environment in April, May, September, October, and November, with the ponds storing and naturally treating wastewater during interim periods. There is no electrical service at the treatment facility site, and effluent flows by gravity to the Clam River via a drainage ditch.

### What Is a Facility Plan and Why Is It Needed

Jacob explained that a facility plan is frequently required by the Wisconsin DNR as part of the WPDES permitting process, under which every community discharging wastewater to the environment operates. Webster's permit was most recently reissued in 2024 and introduced new limits for biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) and phosphorus, along with a compliance schedule. The facility plan — a 20-year planning document submitted to the DNR in March 2026 — evaluates existing infrastructure against projected future conditions and identifies alternatives for achieving ongoing compliance. Completion of the facility plan was a DNR requirement for 2026.

### Needs Identified in Facility Planning

Several needs were identified through the facility planning process:

Collection System: Aging equipment and controls at the lift stations are in need of upgrades.

Treatment Facility: No significant improvements have been made at the treatment facility in over 30 years, leaving many manholes and valves beyond their useful life.

Regulatory Compliance: The reissued permit introduced new BOD limits and, for the first time, phosphorus limits. A review of historical data showed that while the existing facility has generally achieved compliance with the new BOD limits, there are occasional exceedances that indicate additional treatment capacity is warranted. For phosphorus, compliance with the new limit has not been achieved, as no phosphorus

controls were previously required. The Village has been conducting pilot-scale chemical phosphorus removal testing with encouraging results. Total suspended solids (TSS) limits were also identified as a potential future compliance concern.

Jacob noted that a capacity analysis of flows and pollutant loads across the collection system and treatment facility found that hydraulic capacity is generally sufficient; it is the capacity to meet the new water quality limits that is driving the recommended improvements.

### **Recommended Alternative and Estimated Costs**

Jacob presented the recommended alternative, which addresses the identified needs through the following components:

- **Chemical Phosphorus Removal at the Main Lift Station:** Rather than at the treatment facility — which has no electrical service — a full-scale chemical injection system will be installed at the main lift station, where power is already available. This approach allows treatment of all wastewater flowing through the village in a turbulent, well-mixed pipe environment, significantly improving chemical efficiency compared to the Village's current method of manually adding chemical via pontoon boat in the ponds. President, Dedman noted that this approach should be more operationally efficient than the current manual treatment method, a point Jacob affirmed, adding that reduced chemical usage is both cost-effective and environmentally beneficial.
- **Pond Cover on the Final Pond:** A cover will be installed on the final treatment pond to block sunlight and prevent algae growth, which is a primary contributor to BOD and TSS peaks in the effluent. This is expected to produce clearer, higher-quality effluent during discharge periods.
- **Lift Station Upgrades:** Improvements at each of the Village's lift stations, including backup generators for resiliency during power outages and upgraded controls to improve consistency and communication across the system.
- **General Treatment Facility Improvements:** Replacement of aging and inoperable valves and other maintenance items to bring the facility into reliable operating condition for the next 20-year planning horizon.

The estimated total project cost is between \$2.5 million and \$3 million, inclusive of engineering and professional services. Jacob cautioned that these are planning-stage estimates carrying a high contingency, and that cost estimates will become more precise through the design phase and will be confirmed at the time of contractor bids.

### **Funding Options and Projected Rate Impacts**

Jacob outlined the primary funding mechanisms available to the Village:

- **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG):** Offers up to a \$1 million grant with a 50% Village match. This is a competitive process, and the sewer rate projections presented assumed no CDBG award; receipt of a grant would improve the financial picture.
- **Clean Water Fund Program:** The primary assumed funding source, offering 20–30 year loans at subsidized interest rates of approximately 1–2%. The Village is eligible for up to 65% general principal forgiveness, plus an additional up to \$1 million in phosphorus-related principal forgiveness, potentially approaching the 70% maximum. This significantly reduces the amount of the loan that must be repaid.

Based on these funding assumptions, the projected sewer rate increase would bring the current average quarterly rate of approximately \$64 from the current level to approximately \$88 per quarter, depending on the amount of grant funding received. Jacob provided comparisons showing that even under the worst-case

rate scenario, the Village's rates would remain below the statewide average for communities of similar size (500–1,000 population), and the best-case scenario would remain below the 50th percentile.

### **Project Timeline and Next Steps**

Jacob summarized the anticipated project schedule. The facility plan was submitted to the DNR in March 2026, and documentation from this public hearing will also be submitted as a final step. Design work can begin in the coming months, with a key deadline of September 30, 2027, to submit engineer-stamped plans and specifications to the DNR in order to be eligible for the 65% principal forgiveness under the Clean Water Fund. The DNR funding list is typically released in December, aligning with a potential bidding window. Construction bidding is anticipated for fall/winter 2027–2028, with construction targeted for 2028 to meet the regulatory compliance deadline. The sewer rate increase would be implemented in concurrent with the loan closing, which would coincide with the start of construction.

### **Public Discussion and Questions**

A member of the public inquired about the long-term implications of having no electrical power at the treatment facility and whether it was an inevitability that power would eventually be required. Jacob responded that power is not considered inevitable. The cost of electrical power would be significant. Stabilization pond systems throughout the state operate without on-site power, and the natural treatment processes are highly effective given adequate retention time. He noted that the Village's existing facility is operating well below its rated capacity, providing a significant buffer to accommodate all projected growth over the next 20 years, including both residential development and potential industrial users such as a reviewed exit/development project. A capacity increase requiring aeration or power at the facility would only be driven by growth substantially beyond current projections.

A member of the public stated the projection goes for 20 years and asked if that includes flow rate. Jacob said when they do projections, flow rate is first thing they calculate. They look at the current population and flow and talk to Village Leadership about plans for residential and industrial growth.

A board member raised questions about the interplay between project timelines and the CDBG application process. Jacob described WDNR Clean Water Fund and principal forgiveness. He and Teresa clarified that the CDBG application deadline for the current cycle had just passed, meaning the Village would be looking at applying in the next cycle for a 2028 construction project. It was noted that Buy America/Build America requirements associated with CDBG could have some pricing impact, but contractors familiar with the project scope indicated the impact would likely be less than 10% and that lead time implications would be minimal for this type of work. The board agreed to continue evaluating the CDBG opportunity and requested that MSA present the pros, cons, and a decision deadline when appropriate.

A board member also raised the possibility of leveraging Tax Increment District (TID) increment revenue to help offset a portion of project costs, proportional to the TID's share of wastewater flow. Teresa acknowledged the concept and noted that the timing of TID increment generation relative to the project construction contract would need to be carefully evaluated, as the project may begin before increment levels are known.

- III. **ADJOURNMENT.** Motion was made by Trustee Weis; seconded by Trustee Armstrong to adjourn the Public Hearing at 5:40 p.m. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

*Debra Doriott-Kuhnly*

Clerk/Treasurer

May 13, 2026

\*\*\*These minutes are subject to approval at next month's Regular Meeting.