

Webster Town Board

May 25, 2023

A workshop meeting of the Webster Town Board was called to order by Supervisor Flaherty at 5:30 p.m. at the Webster Town Board Meeting Room, 1002 Ridge Road, Webster, New York, with the following officials present:

Supervisor	Thomas J. Flaherty
Councilman	William G. Abbott
Councilman	John J. Cahill
Councilwoman	Patricia T. Cataldi
Councilwoman	Ginny L. Nguyen
Town Attorney	Charles J. Genese

Department Heads Present:

Finance Director	Paul Adams
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Supervisor Flaherty presented the results of nine months of due diligence on ambulance coverage in Webster and short-term and long-term options.

On January 15, 2020, the Town was granted a Certificate of Need (CON). This allowed the Town to form Webster Emergency Medical Services (WEMS) and provide Basic Life Support (BLS) ambulance services. The Town outsources this service through a five-year contract with Northeast Quadrant Advanced Life Support (NEQALS). The five-year contract expires on December 31, 2025. NEQALS also provides Advanced Life Support (ALS) services within the Town. Historically, there have been one-year contracts with NEQALS for ALS services; however, the most recent was signed on December 14, 2020 for the 2021 calendar year. The contract was not renegotiated since the Town CON took over all of Webster in January 2022. The Town Budget included a \$50,000.00 annual payment to NEQALS for 2022 and 2023. The Town and NEQALS have continued to honor the terms of the 2021 contract to date.

NEQALS management approached the Town of Webster in 2022 requesting additional funding as they were experiencing financial difficulties providing Emergency Medical Services (EMS). In July 2022, the Town of Webster awarded NEQALS an American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Grant in the amount of \$204,734.00. Shortly after receiving the additional funding, NEQALS Chief Executive Officer appeared before the Town Board requesting the establishment of an Ambulance Tax District to raise \$800,000.00 annually, starting as soon as January 1, 2023. In September 2022, the Town Board began a Due Diligence Process to gain a better understanding of the NEQALS business model and financial position prior to deciding on new additional funding.

Proposed short term options were presented for the Town Board’s consideration with a decision to be made by June 30, 2023.

Town proposed short-term options:

- No additional funding to NEQALS in 2023 or change to the contract.
- Additional funding with no contract changes with funding levels, term and changes to be determined.

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- Additional funding of \$20,000.00 per month for one year starting May 1, 2023 with performance measures established including monthly oversight.
- Additional funding in parallel with a NEQALS developed format plan for change of leadership, change of a fly car core model and change of organizational and/or operational structure.

NEQALS proposed short-term options:

- Additional funding of \$45,000.00 per month for eight months starting May 1, 2023 with no contract changes or change to organizational structure or leadership.
- Additional funding of \$40,000.00 for the twelve months starting May 1, 2023 with no contract changes or change to organizational structure or leadership and a negotiated amount thereafter for the remainder of the contract ending on December 31, 2025.

A short-term contingency option was also presented which was to award Penfield Volunteer Ambulance all of Webster by July 1, 2023, as the Town continues to research the long-term options.

Proposed long-term options:

- Continue with the current five-year contract and reevaluate options for 2026 prior to contract expiration.
- Exercise the CON to create a Town Ambulance Department.
- Issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for EMS providers.
- Create an Ambulance Tax District.
- Consolidation of current EMS agencies.

Preliminary next steps toward a long-term solution were presented.

In the Fall of 2023, the University of Rochester Simon School has offered to do a free analysis of the Town owned CON and the long-term options. The timeframe to execute will be between January 2024 and December 2025. Another option for consideration would be to hire a paid consultant to prepare an analysis of the Town owned CON and the long-term options.

Following the presentation, a general discussion took place. It was the consensus of the Town Board to dedicate the June 8, 2023 Town Board workshop a public forum for comments and questions on the short-term and long-term options for ambulance services.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

Dorothy M. Maguire, Town Clerk