

THIS IS WEBSTER, N.H.



USEFUL LINKS

Town of Webster <https://www.webster-nh.gov/>

Merrimack Valley School System
<https://www.mvsdpride.org/home>

Webster-Hopkinton Transfer Station (Trash)
<https://www.hopkinton-nh.gov/transfer-station>

NH Division of Motor Vehicles <https://www.dmv.nh.gov/>

Webster, NH Community page Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/850748405878331>

Fire Department Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100070001716244>

Police Department Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/137874233625438>

Pillsbury Lake Community Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/510564486078165>

First Congregational Church of Webster, NH Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/TheFirstCongregationalChurchOfWebsterUcc>

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Town of Webster Offices 603-648-2272
Webster Elementary School 603-648-2467
Merrimack Valley Middle School 603-753-6336
Merrimack Valley High School 603-753-4311

Welcome to Webster!

If you are new to New Hampshire, or moved from a larger area of the state, you may find our way of doing things rather different from what you are used to.

Webster is a residential and agricultural town which was once a part of the Town of Boscaawen. This booklet has been prepared to acquaint you with the workings of the town, some of its interesting history and sites, and other useful information.

A FEW PRACTICAL THINGS FIRST

Webster is a small town with few businesses. **See the links** on the inside cover, both front and back, for topics mentioned in this booklet.

- ♦ **Town Hall Complex** (945 Battle Street) contains the town offices (including that of the Town Clerk), Town Hall (for meetings), the Library, and a commercial kitchen for public meals.
- ♦ **Public Safety Building** (851 Battle Street) houses both the Police Department and the Fire Department.
- ♦ **Town website.** The town-maintained website contains hours of operation for departments and boards, town contact information, tax data, meeting minutes, and much more. Most Webster boards and departments have a separate webpage with additional information, usually including a mission statement. To receive emails from the town, sign up on the “Subscribe to News” tab.
- ♦ **Vehicle Registration.** Visit the Town Clerk to register your vehicles for the first time. After that you may be able to re-register online.
- ♦ **Driver License.** There are several locations in the state to obtain a

driver license. The closest two are Concord, NH and Newport, NH.

- ♦ **Groceries, gas, post office, banks.** Depending on where you live in Webster, the closest grocery store, gas station, post office, and bank are either in Warner or in Contoocook.
- ♦ **Water and sewer.** The town does not have sewers, which means every household has a septic system. All homes have a water well except for 50 or so houses sharing a water system in the Pillsbury Lake Village part of town.
- ♦ **Trash, recyclables.** The town does not provide trash pickup. Webster shares a "transfer station" with Hopkinton, and "dump stickers" are obtained through the town clerks for a small fee. There is at least one commercial company that picks up household trash. Ask your neighbors or inquire through the community Facebook page. The transfer station is located at 491 East Penacook Rd. in Hopkinton.
- ♦ **Wildlife, hunting, fishing.** Webster is blessed with an abundance of wildlife, including black bear, deer, moose, bobcat, fox, rabbit, and turkey, to name a few. Check with NH Fish and Game for hunting and fishing regulations, including licenses and seasons. Property owners may grant or refuse hunting on their lands. Check first!
- ♦ **Burn permits.** The only time you can burn brush without a permit is when the ground is completely covered by snow. The rest of the year permits are required for all outside fires including outdoor fireplaces and chimeneas. With a permit you are allowed to burn firewood and brush - not household trash.
- ♦ **Winter Road Maintenance.** The town does not have a clean road policy. The snowplow vehicles begin plowing when the snow has accumulated 2 to 3 inches. After roads are clear, sanding and salting will begin. Parking is not allowed in the road right-of-way November 1 through April 1.

- ♦ **Storms, Power outages.** The Webster, NH Community Facebook page becomes the de facto information exchange during outages. Residents post outages, locations of closed roads, and offer assistance.
- ♦ **N.H. Route 127 is named Battle Street.** This is the same road, though local residents and the older history books may refer to it by either name.
- ♦ The **area code** is 603. The **zip code** is 03303 and is shared with the entire town of Boscawen and part of Concord.
- ♦ **Internet access:** TDS Telecom, or Starlink (satellite). The town areas directly adjacent to neighboring towns may have other options.

SCHOOLS

The Webster Elementary School is located directly across from the Town Hall Complex on Battle Street. Webster Elementary is part of the Merrimack Valley School District (MVSD), a cooperative system consisting of the towns of Boscawen, Loudon, Salisbury, Webster, and the Penacook portion of Concord. For each town, Kindergarten through Grade 5 are housed in the local grammar school, while the middle school and high school are both in Penacook. School calendars and so much more may be found on the main MVSD website and those of the individual schools.

Webster Elementary School 603-648-2467

Parent-Teacher Organization websterwildcatspto@gmail.com

School sports (see links)

LIBRARY

The Webster Free Public Library is a department of the town. Information about the library may be found on the town's website

under Departments or by visiting the library itself. The current hours are Sunday Noon-4pm, Monday 1-8pm, Wednesday 9am-8pm.

VOTER REGISTRATION AND VOTING

Any Webster resident 18 years old or older may register to vote with the Town Clerk, or with the Supervisors of the Checklist when they are in session and on election day while the polls are open. Certain identification documents are required for registration. Check *Registering to Vote in New Hampshire* in the links section.

Town Hall is the voting location for local, state, and federal elections. Town Meeting, as well as many other town boards or department meetings are often held in Town Hall.

MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE FACILITY - TRANSFER STATION

The Transfer Station is jointly owned by the towns of Hopkinton and Webster, with expenditures based on population. Both towns may use the facilities; though the required "dump stickers" are obtained through the separate town clerks. Current hours of operation are Monday, Wednesday, Saturday 8am to 5pm, and Friday 1pm to 5pm. It is closed on some holidays, but may be open another day to compensate. Hopkinton adopted the "Pay-by-Bag" system some years ago, but Webster does not participate. Check the website for additional information.

PARKS AND RECREATION

The Pearson Memorial Park is located on the banks of the Blackwater River behind the Elementary School. The soccer field is adjacent to the school.

Many sports are offered for school children; contact the elementary school directly for information, or check the additional information

at the end of this booklet.

OLD HOME DAYS

Old Home Days celebration has been a New Hampshire tradition since 1899. Webster holds this event in late August every year, with a parade, followed by a picnic at the Pearson Memorial Park. Watch for information on the Community Facebook page.

TOWN GOVERNMENT

Webster, like many other small towns in New Hampshire, is governed by a Select Board, produces a Town Warrant, and holds a Town Meeting to elect officials and to authorize expenditures, among other things. The Select Board is the executive branch, and the registered voters attending the Town Meeting are the legislative body.

The New Hampshire Municipal Association has excellent articles about our form of government, especially this one: *16 Things Every Citizen Should Know About Town Meeting*. (See links)

The Town Election, held on the second Tuesday in March, is technically the start of Town Meeting and is recessed until the following Saturday for the business portion. Any ballot voting done on Tuesday is part of the town warrant and will appear as a warrant article. On Saturday, the residents have a right to speak on any Warrant Article.

As of the 2020 census, Webster had 1,913 residents. In 2023, there were about 1,250 registered voters, and Webster had an annual Operating Budget of approximately \$2.385 million.

TOWN OF WEBSTER ANNUAL REPORT

The Select Board produces an Annual Report that contains, among other things, a comprehensive report of the previous year, along

with the town warrant and proposed budget for the current year. The Select Board creates the town warrant. Residents may submit a petitioned warrant article to the Board at least 5 weeks before the second Tuesday in March, following the rules in RSA 39:3.

Older Annual Reports may be found through the Webster Historical Society's website. Vital statistics first appeared in the 1888 Town Report; the Town Warrants first appeared in 1920; and Town Meeting Minutes first appeared in 1969.

PILLSBURY LAKE VILLAGE DISTRICT

PLVD is a "Village District Title III," in accordance with RSA 52:1. This district is a village within the Town of Webster and has its own voting district, Commissioners, additional rules and taxes. Seek more information through the town offices, neighbors, and on Facebook.

TOWN OFFICES

The Town Hall Complex was constructed in 1991, when the original Grange building and the building that was once the Anderson Memorial Church were joined by a large, two-story connector, thus creating a new Town Hall, library, and offices for the Town Clerk, Town Administrator, Tax Office, and other town functions. Additional offices are in the Public Safety Building.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

According to the Right to Know Law, RSA 91-A, all government meetings and records are available to the public, with a few exceptions as stated in RSA 91-A:2-a,i. There may be a fee for copies of both paper and digital records.

Therefore, all town meetings, such as Select Board and Planning Board meetings, are open to the public except as noted. Attending a Public Meeting does not guarantee the right to speak. The major

exceptions to this rule are the Town Meeting, and any Public Hearings, where residents do have a right to speak.

Most board and committee meetings are video recorded and available on YouTube, links to which are available from the Town website on the *Meeting Video* tab.

SELECT BOARD

The Select Board meets the first and third Mondays of each month, usually at the Town Hall. Their date and time schedule may be found on the town website. Residents may request to be on the agenda by contacting the Town Administrator at 603-648-2272.

REVISED STATUTES ANNOTATED

The laws of the state of N.H. are called RSAs, for Revised Statute Annotated. The General Court of New Hampshire, (or New Hampshire General Court) is the two-chambered state legislature, not the court system! You may find all the RSAs on their website using either their search or browse features.

PROPERTY ASSESSMENT AND TAX RATE CALCULATIONS

By law, properties in the entire state are re-assessed every five years on a rolling basis. Municipalities must ensure property assessment according to the New Hampshire Assessing Standards Board. The Department of Revenue Administration (DRA), Municipal and Property Division then equalizes the local assessed valuation of each municipality to bring such valuations to the full and true market value of the property. (RSA 21-J) The DRA establishes the tax rates based on equalized valuation for the County, State Education, and Local Education.

The town, in conjunction with DRA, establishes the municipal tax rate according to town needs, based on Local Assessed Valuation

which is in the Tax Rate Calculation section of the Town Report.

Each Webster property owner must fill out the “Inventory of Taxable Property” by April 15th every year. This form is available at the Town Election in March or by mail. If there is a change to the property, a re-evaluation is done based on those changes. If an improvement is incomplete, the reassessment is done every year until it is complete. If you own property in town and do not receive this form, contact the town offices!

Tax rates are set in October. The June bill is simply half the previous year (since the rate has not yet been set), and the December bill makes up any difference to complete the year's total. That is why the December bill is usually different from the one in June.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF WEBSTER, N.H.

The land we call New Hampshire today was prime real estate to the settlers of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay. In 1732, eighty-one citizens of Newbury, MA petitioned for a grant of land. The petitioners were required to settle 81 families there within four years, each with 1/84th part of the land, and a share each for a settled minister, a school, and a meeting house.

The first homesteaders left Newbury for the Contoocook Intervale (later named Boscawen) in the spring of 1734.

In the 1700s, everything was hard...settlers cleared forests, pulled stumps, constructed stone walls, plowed fields, raised crops and livestock for food and wool, preserved food for winter, made their clothing, built their houses, schools, and meeting houses from hand-hewn timbers. By 1790, the part of Boscawen west of Beaver Dam Creek had become so populous, and travel was often so difficult that the town voted to build a second meeting house in “West

Boscawen.”

The western part of Boscawen continued to grow and prosper, with communities, mills and mill-dams along the Blackwater River, while the eastern part became a lively commercial area around King Street and great farms in the floodplains near the Merrimack River. By 1860, the town was in such discord over taxes and expenditures, that at Town Meeting, the residents voted to set aside “West Boscawen” as the separate Town of Webster.

The Daniel Webster Grange, established in 1884, was an active segment of life in Webster for more than 100 years. The National Grange and local communities encourage families to band together to promote agriculture and the economic and political well-being of the community.

The Freshet of 1927, the great floods of 1936, and the hurricane of 1938 all emphasized the need for flood control in the northeast. Hence, in 1937, the Army Corps of Engineers chose Webster for a flood control dam, and claimed by public domain 1100 acres in Webster. In 1940, there were only 351 persons in Webster, and many of them lived along the banks of the River. The town center was essentially destroyed and all homes, mills, the meeting house and the adjacent cemetery all had to be moved. When the town declined to move the meeting house, it became salvage. The Society for the Preservation of the Old Meeting House in Webster, N.H. purchased this building and had it moved to its present location on Battle Street.

For most of the next 50 years, Town Hall meetings were held in the stand-alone Grange Hall, until the town decided to construct the new Town Hall Complex.

As with other small towns, Webster is always looking for volunteers to run for elections and for Boards and Committees. The all-volunteer Fire Department, sports programs, Old Home Day activities, community suppers, and the historical society all need volunteers.

WEBSTER HISTORY BOOKS

These books provide a comprehensive view of what the area was like from the first settlements to 1983. All but the most recent 2 books are out of copyright and may be found in the Webster Digital Archive. The next fifty-year history book is due out in early 2034. Please volunteer!

- ♦ Price, Ebenezer; *Rev. Mr. Price's History of Boscawen. From 1732 to 1820*; published 1823.
- ♦ Coffin, Charles C.; *One Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the Settlement of Boscawen and Webster, Merrimack Co., N.H. August 16, 1883 also Births Recorded on the Town Records From 1733 to 1850*; published 1884.
- ♦ Coffin, Charles Carleton; *The History of Boscawen and Webster, From 1733 to 1878*; Published 1878.
- ♦ Buxton, Willis G.; *History Boscawen – Webster Fifty Years 1883-1933*; published 1934.
- ♦ Webster History Committee; *Webster New Hampshire 1933-1983 History*; published 1984.
- ♦ Silver, Walter Theo and Linnea Stadig; *From King's Plantation to Home Town Heritage/Boscawen and Webster, New Hampshire*; published 1997.

HISTORIC BUILDINGS

There are approximately 100 homes in Webster more than a century old. In addition, two historic buildings are on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Old Meeting House (1220 Battle St.) was built in 1791 and is owned by the Webster Historical Society.

The Second Congregational Church of Boscawen (1011 Long St.) was built in 1823, and renamed to the First Congregational Church of Webster after the town split. This church is the only one in town and welcomes everyone.

WEBSTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Society for the Preservation of the Old Meeting House in Webster, NH, was incorporated in 1941 for the sole purpose of saving the Meeting House from destruction due to the Blackwater Dam project. The society is now known by its registered Trade Name, Webster Historical Society.

The Old Meeting House is now used as a museum that displays many 18th and early 19th century tools, household implements, and other collectables from an earlier time.

The reproduction horse-shed (the original was used to shelter horses during meetings) contains a sleigh, carriage and horse- powered farm equipment. It also houses an enormous set of mast wheels used to haul the King's Pines.

The Society's mission is to preserve this grand old building, to present and preserve the Society's many artifacts, and to provide historical education.

This group maintains two websites plus an extensive archive on Google Drive. The original website contains general information

about the Society, open hours, activities, stories, and many photographs.

The Genealogy database currently contains about 70,000 persons, all with some connection to Webster, NH.

The Webster Digital Archive, currently more than 85 Gigabytes of data, is a research tool for the many aspects of Webster's history. It holds not only the Society's business records, but also thousands of photographs, oral histories from the 1970s, journals, photos of all the headstones in the town's cemeteries, and town histories.

In addition, the archive contains a section for the town, with all Annual Reports and existing Town Meeting Minutes.

All these digital assets may be accessed through the Society's main website, or use the links on the back cover to go directly to a specific section.

Please join us in preserving the history of Webster, whatever your interest or expertise. Information about membership, committees, and activities is available on the general website.

MORE LINKS

Voting Information - Registering to Vote in New Hampshire
<https://www.sos.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt561/files/documents/Election%20Documents/registering-to-vote-in-new-hampshire.pdf> (check your download location if the PDF file does not open)

The General Court of New Hampshire (NH Legislature)
<https://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/>

New Hampshire Municipal Association
<https://www.nhmunicipal.org/>
<https://www.nhmunicipal.org/town-city-article/16-things-every-citizen-should-know-about-town-meeting>

NH Fish and Game <https://www.wildlife.nh.gov/>

SCHOOL SPORTS CONTACT INFORMATION

Soccer <https://www.facebook.com/groups/websteryouthsoccermvyouthsoccernh@gmail.com>

Basketball-ICB <https://www.icbbasketball.com/prideaau>

Football- Blue storm bluestormfootball@yahoo.com

Lacrosse- Blue storm derekburnford04@hotmail.com

Field hockey-mv youth field hockey Kckenney1966@gmail.com

Baseball & Softball <https://mvybs.sportngin.com/>

ONLINE VERSION

An online version of this document is on the first page of the Webster Historical Society website. The online version may contain updated information.

This booklet is provided by the Webster Historical Society and is solely responsible for its contents. Comments and corrections are appreciated.

Email: webster1860@gmail.com

Main website: <https://websterhistoricalsociety.org>

Genealogy website: <https://webster-nh.net/>

Webster Digital Archive, Artifacts:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1pZOyoylqUGnKI4UFSbaa9HcyRPSY10yl?usp=sharing>

Webster Digital Archive, Town business:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1keYhFz91bSzWrbD1OJZadQGfmOzd383-?usp=sharing>

[FYI: The entire URLs are listed so that you may be sure where the links go.]

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