

# Moving Woodstock's Website from woodstockny.org to woodstockny.gov

Laura Ricci – 12/16/25

**Question:** Why are we moving Woodstock's Website from woodstockny.org to woodstockny.gov?

**Answer:** NYS Law requiring that municipalities move to .gov websites by December 21, 2025.

## **Excerpt from: General Municipal Law Section 300**

### **Municipal websites**

[https://newyork.public.law/laws/n.y.\\_general\\_municipal\\_law\\_section\\_300](https://newyork.public.law/laws/n.y._general_municipal_law_section_300) Last modified March 7, 2025

**All municipal corporations having a population**, as shown by the latest preceding decennial federal census, **equal to or greater than one thousand five hundred persons, shall maintain an official website with a “.gov” domain name that is accessible to the public and update such website regularly**, as follows: the official website shall contain basic information on the municipality including but not limited to hours of operations, elected officials and services provided and the website shall contain a privacy policy that is prominently posted and written in plain language that informs website visitors of any personal information that is being collected and how it is being used.

Shall, at a minimum, contain the following information:

- a.** all documents required by subdivision seven of [§ 30 \(Reports\)](#);
- b.** notice of all municipal elections, public hearings and public meetings including regular board or legislative meetings;
- c.** agenda and minutes of municipal meetings as required by article seven of the public officers law; and
- d.** an up to date version of, or an active hyperlink to, the municipality's codes or local laws and resolutions

**\* NB Effective December 21, 2025**

**Question:** Why is Laura Ricci personally manually building our woodstockny.gov website on Digital Towpath's Concrete CMS platform? It has been said other Town's just redirected their new .gov domain to their existing website. Why didn't we just do that?

**Answer:**

- The woodstockny.org website is housed by Digital Towpath. Digital Towpath has two production environments where websites can be housed.
  1. The **environment that our woodstockny.org website is on is a very old and obsolete environment**, developed years ago by a person now deceased. The functionality is outdated. Digital Towpath is not in a position to change the functionality of that environment.
    - When someone accesses our current woodstockny.org website, the url translates to <https://townwoodstock.digitaltowpath.org:10111/content>. If our woodstockny.gov url were connected to our current website, the url would still translate to <https://townwoodstock.digitaltowpath.org:10111/content>. **So if we pointed woodstockny.gov to our current website, we would still be woodstockny.org not woodstockny.gov.**
  2. The **second environment provided by Digital Towpath uses Concrete CMS**. If we have our website on Digital Towpath's Concrete CMS platform our woodstockny.gov url will stay .gov.
    - **Other town's who successfully just directed their new .gov url to their existing website content very likely had websites on current platforms.** Again, our website had not yet been moved to a current platform.
    - **There is no automated way to move our website from Digital Towpath's original environment to their Concrete CMS environment. To have the Woodstock website on Digital Towpath's Concrete CMS environment, the new website has to be manually built page by page.**

**Question:** Why is Laura Ricci personally manually building our woodstockny.gov website on Digital Towpath's Concrete CMS platform rather than having the decisions for our new woodstockny.gov website being handled by a committee?

**Answer:**

- **March 18, 2025 Town Board meeting**, Bennet Ratcliff presented Best Practices for a Municipal Website, a presentation that he and Maria-Elena Conte worked on. YouTube is at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PpPz5koYV0>, starting about 57 minutes into the meeting. The presentation is at <https://townwoodstock.digitaltowpath.org:10111/content/Generic/View/76>. **As Bennet says in the meeting, they were asked to look at alternatives for the municipal website.** Bennett and Maria-Elena had website responsibility not Laura who was busy with other responsibilities.
- **September 26, 2025**, Laura attended the **Digital Towpath Annual Meeting** where they discussed the state requirement for municipalities to move websites to .gov.
- **October 4, 2025**, Laura, after having talked with Bill McKenna, **reached out to PCA via email to ask questions about Woodstock's move to .gov.** Laura sent a follow-up email **October 9, 2025.**
- **October 10, 2025**, PCA and Laura had a virtual meeting. **PCA explained** the plan that when we receive the woodstockny.gov domain, **they would just point it to the current woodstockny.org content.** Sounded easy.
- **November 7, 2025**, Laura was talking with Digital Towpath about an email outage and mentioned to Digital Towpath that **PCA's woodstockny.gov plan was to point to the current woodstock.org content. Digital Towpath explained the url would still translate to woodstock.org. It would not be a .gov website.**
- **November 10, 2025** Laura **proposed to Bill McKenna that she build the woodstockny.gov website on Digital Towpath's Concrete CMS platform**, to become our woodstockny.gov website. But **first, to confirm feasibility**, Laura would ask Digital Towpath for a test url and test the technology.
- **November 20, 2025**, Digital Towpath provided Laura with the **test url to begin to build Woodstock's website on Concrete CMS.**
- **November 21, 2025**, **Laura began to learn CMS to investigate the feasibility of her creating Woodstock's .gov website on Concrete CMS.** Over the coming days, she confirmed it is feasible for her to build Woodstock's website on Concrete CMS. It is a **huge job.** It is a **manual process.** The woodstockny.org website has **a lot of pages**, and Laura's plan was to **"move everything"**. To complete this work in a month, **due December 21, 2025**, Laura needed to move fast and efficiently. **Forming a committee and waiting for decisions to come from a committee would make meeting the December 21 date impossible.**
- **November 26, 2025**, Bill McKenna received word that **our woodstockny.gov domain is in place.** Hurray! We will be able to deploy our Concrete CMS woodstockny.gov website to production when Laura has it ready.
- **December 16, 2025**, **Laura continues to manually migrate woodstockny.org pages to woodstockny.gov one page at a time.** A lot has been done, but there is still a lot to do.

**In summary**, on November 7, 2025, Laura identified a gap and did not see another viable way to close that gap before the December 21, 2025 ,deadline.

One more thing:

Excerpt from 11/21/25 email from **Laura Ricci to Anula Courtis**:

**I have been investigating the .gov url change and have been in touch with Digital Towpath, who provides our website and emails, and PCA, who provides Technology services for Woodstock.**

Since the deadline for moving websites to .gov is this year, Bill and Melanie are taking action, and I have been doing some related investigations. But it sounds like you may also be involved? Is there someone on your team that is working this? If so, I likely should compare notes with that person so we don't have multiple people doing the same thing. Again, **it made sense that this website effort be led by Bill and Melanie since it is due this year, but if multiple people are working this, let's collaborate.**

Excerpt from 11/21/25 email from **Anula Courtis to Laura Ricci**:

**The responsibility for this change over and proper testing is on the current administration, I don't have anyone working on it.**

As of November 21, 2025, what were Laura's credentials to create our new website?

**Webmaster experience:** Zero

**Transferable skills:** Pretty good

**Technical Ability:** 48 years of Information Technology experience, including:

- The use of many tools, including Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint) and a technical certification (Lotus Notes). **Concrete CMS was really just another tool to be learned.**
- Over 30 years of Management experience.
- Over 25 years of Project Management experience, including Project Management certification.

**Woodstock knowledge:**

- Resident: 45 years
- Woodstock Town volunteer mid-2010 through 2015. Volunteer activities during that time included: Dog Park Committee, Planning Board, Deputy Supervisor.
- Woodstock Town Board: 2016 through Present. Assignments included Comprehensive Plan, Woodstock Environmental Commission, Complete Streets, and Library liaison, Zoning Revision Committee and Housing Oversight Task Force member, and Deputy Supervisor

**Who else in town would have been more capable, more knowledgeable and more willing to handle the creation of our new woodstockny.gov website by the deadline , and at no additional cost?**

## Additional notes about the move of information from woodstockny.org to woodstockny.gov

- **Low risk.** Anything Laura is doing can be redone. It is easy to make changes in Concrete CMS. Plus, the woodstockny.org website will still be available for years and accessible, if we want to keep it accessible.
- **No additional cost.** Digital Towpath is charging us the same annual fee, \$1,632 to cover the time period from May 1, 2026 to April 30, 2027, for our website and emails, whether we use their old and problematic environment or whether we use their new, flexible, secure, easily maintainable, Open Source, Concrete CMS environment. Laura is salaried, so her extra time on this is not costing the Town extra money.
- **Information and url link verification.** Laura is testing all links before moving them over. Many links and pieces of information were obsolete. For failed links, Laura did online searches to confirm the correct link to add. If there was not a working link, and the search did not return a viable result, for example, a venue showed in the online search as “permanently closed”, Laura did not include it.
- **Easier future website maintenance.** For non-Woodstock organizations, Laura included web urls and sometimes addresses, but did not include phone numbers or contact names. They should be kept current in the venue urls. Future woodstockny.gov webmasters do not need to worry about keeping these current.
- **Better fonts and graphics.** Concrete CMS provides functionality for more attractive and informative pages, and flexibility for ease of changes.
- **Concrete CMS information available online.** To learn Concrete CMS, Laura watched videos, got one-on-one help from Digital Towpath, and regularly found helpful information doing online Concrete CMS searches.
- **Laura is currently the webmaster** for our woodstockny.gov website. Anula is likely to choose a different webmaster at some point in 2026, but today it is Laura, who can continue as webmaster as needed.

**Woodstock website demo and notes on the Concrete CMS test system  
(due to time constraints, a portion of these items were covered):**

- **Calendar:**
  - Start with 2026, view woodstockny.org for 2025
  - Only one year is kept anyway in woodstockny.org
- **Home Page**
  - Top navigation
  - Banner
  - Footer information
- **Page comparisons: Font, Image, Links**
  - Financial
  - Information: Disaster Preparedness
  - Information: Environment: Town Hall
  - Welcome to Woodstock: Getting To and From Woodstock



## Next Steps:

- Laura continue building the woodstockny.gov website:  
Laws, Departments, Boards Committees Employment, Meetings/Agenda/Minutes/Calendar
- Go Live with woodstockny.gov, perhaps as early as December 19, 2025, but with the notice that the website is still under construction, and stating areas not yet complete
- Laura to hold woodstockny.gov office hours December 22, 2025 6:30 pm on Zoom, see woodstockny.org calendar for details
- Website complete, perhaps as early as December 31, 2025
- Laura to hold woodstockny.gov office hours in 2026 as needed
- New Town Board to determine how long to keep woodstockny.org accessible by end users; Digital Towpath will still have it available for the foreseeable future
- Woodstock has already paid Digital Towpath through April, 2026. New Town Board to determine whether to pay Digital Towpath the annual \$1,632 charge to use their Concrete CMS services from May 1, 2026 through April, 2027 or move to a new web platform by May 1, 2026