
Town of Rockport, Maine



Town Manager's Office

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Town Manager's Report & Update March 9, 2026

Town Budget:

Last Monday, I distributed the FY 2027 Town Manager's Budget to the Select Board and Budget Committee as these committee's begin their work on the budget this month.

I'm pleased to report the draft municipal net budget is up 0.74 percent over FY 2026. All involved from the Select Board, the Budget Committee, Departments Heads and all staff have worked diligently to try to find areas to find efficiencies and examine costs. I believe this budget meets the needs of the community without sacrifices to public safety, maintains consistent investment in our Town's infrastructure and supports the employees who work hard on the taxpayer's behalf daily. While the municipal budget is roughly 1/3rd of the property tax bill and larger increases are expected at the county and school levels; I'm proud of our efforts to hear the concerns raised by our residents and respond accordingly. With inflation increasing 2.8% annually and health insurance premiums increasing nationally in the private market, the market pressures influencing budgets at all levels are a challenge for all who are tasked with creating those budgets.

Now the Select Board and Budget Committee will review the draft budget. The Budget Committee will be tasked with creating recommendations to alter the budget, if it chooses. Then the Select Board will finalize the budget to be decided by voters in June. A copy of the full budget is available on the Town's website.

Town Clerk:

Nomination Papers:

Now available for the June Elections, you can pick-up during regular office hours Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. All nomination papers are due back no later than 3:30 p.m. on Friday, April 10th, 2026.

Among the positions available for election in June are:

2 - Select Board (Kim Graffam and Michael Thompson) 3-year terms

Pending Select Board action Monday evening: 1 – Select Board (Michelle Hannan) 1-year term

1 - Library Committee (C. Lee Goss) 3-year term

3 - Budget Committee (Clay Tolman, Bill Bow, Geoffrey Parker) 3-year terms

1 - School Board (Cricket Fuller)

Property Tax Due Date:

The second property tax payment due date is coming up on April 15th!

Dog Licenses:

If you have yet to license your dog for 2026, you will be subject to a \$25.00 late fee.

Planning and Community Development:

Grants:

The Town was awarded a \$270,000 grant from MaineDOT Bike & Ped program for the design and engineering of the Rt 90 multi-use path which would connect Rockport village with our schools. We have a match requirement of 10% of the grant amount, but this effort will allow this project to be “shovel ready” and much more attractive for grant opportunities to cover construction.

Harbor Strategic Plan Task Force

Woodard & Curran was selected by the Harbor Strategic Plan Implementation Task Force for their RFP submission for the design of the improvements to the east side of the harbor called out in the Harbor Strategic Plan. Their proposal has been posted to the [Harbor Strategic Plan](#) project page for ease of viewing. Their proposal estimate for design and engineering is \$547,950. This cost is being included in the grant application for Working Waterfront, and the contract is contingent on funding availability.

Sewer Infill Project:

Town staff are reviewing proposals for the construction bid process for the sewer extensions on Commercial Street and Union Street. We hope to circulate the bid in early April.

Planning Board:

The Planning Board has reviewed a few Land Use Ordinance amendments, Subdivision Ordinance overhaul, and Zoning map amendments at their February meeting. These amendments are in conjunction with implementing the Comprehensive Plan.

Rockport Common RFP:

Construction of Rockport Common has been put out for bid. We are eager to open construction bids which are due on April 3rd.

Police Department:

We’ve had a great deal of change over the past few months with the Rockport Police Department, but we are solid footing with full staffing and our leadership of interim chief Chris Young and Sgt. James Greeley have our department well suited for the years to come.

Meet our interim Police Chief:

Chris Young is our interim police chief. Young, previously Rockport PD’s lieutenant, started his career in law enforcement in Rockport in the mid 1990’s under Chief Forrest Doucette. Then Young moved to a long career with Rockland Police Department, rising through the ranks to chief of that department until retiring in 2021. Missing the day-to-day passion for policing, Young returned to Rockport as our department’s lieutenant in November 2024. Chris and newly promoted Sargeant James Greeley have helped oversee the hiring of multiple vacant positions over recent months and are excited to engage in more proactive policing throughout Rockport.

Winter Parking Ban:

The Winter Parking Ban extends through April 15th which means street parking is not allowed midnight to 6 a.m. Illegally parked cars may be towed, at the owner’s risk and expense, in the event of a snowstorm or if the police determine the vehicles are posing a threat to public safety.

Assessing:

Training:

Rebecca completed her GIS class at UMaine.

MMA - Strategic & Finance Committee (SFC)

MMA's Executive Committee, which largely steers the organization, wanted to widen the SFC's perspective and, this year, recruited two municipal employees to serve on the committee. Kerry Leichtman has been asked to serve in this capacity and aid in the future direction of MMA. Thank you, Kerry!

Library:

Programs:

For information on our events, check out the library website <https://www.rockport.lib.me.us/>

Book Sale:

The Friends of the Rockport Public Library will be hosting their first BIG BOOK SALE of 2026 on Saturday and Sunday, March 27 and 28, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The Friends are LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS to help set up, restock, cashier, and break down the sale. If you are interested in picking up a shift, please call the library at 207-236-3642 or stop by and look through the volunteer sign up notebook at the circulation desk. Many thanks!

Opera House:

Events:

For information on our events, please check out the Opera House website:

<https://rockportoperahouse.org/rockportoperahouse>

We also have Yoga or Dance classes several days a week, click here for more information:

<https://rockportoperahouse.org/rockport-village-yoga-and-dance-1>

Sponsorships:

If you wish to participate in helping make these shows part of our calendar in 2026, please visit RockportOperaHouse.org/Sponsorship to learn more. Your sponsorship *will* make a difference and *will* bring even more vibrancy to our ongoing programming!

Take a moment right now to give to the **Rockport ACE Annual Fund – Arts, Culture and Entertainment** for all. Make a potentially tax-deductible donation of any amount to support the work we are doing to revitalize the arts in Rockport and bring the community together.

Individuals or businesses can choose to make a one-time donation or recurrent monthly contribution of any amount using the custom feature on our giving page. Businesses may also choose from already crafted levels which each include visibility for your business as a gesture of gratitude for giving.

Harbor:

Abbie will be unavailable for the next several, and potentially longer due to an accident at the Snow Bowl. She will be delayed in responding to correspondence, but if there is anything immediately concerning, please call the Town Office.

Mooring Bills on The Way. Reminder that the bills will not be mailed, only sent by email. You may pay in person at the town office, but we are trying to encourage online payments and boat registrations to cut down on staff time at the counter.

Fire Department:

Want to join the Fire Department?

Rockport Fire and EMS are always looking for individuals who want to join our crew! We are always looking for Per Diem Paramedics and Per Diem Firefighters EMT/AEMT and volunteers of all types! For those interested in learning more about joining the fire department, please contact Chief Jason Peasley at jpeasley@rockportmaine.gov.

Civic Ready:

We encourage all residents to sign up for this, if you are interested in knowing what is happening in the Town of Rockport. What is great about this system is that you decide which types of information you will receive whether it is a reminder when property taxes are due to information on an upcoming event at the library, opera house or when a public works project is happening in your neighborhood; Civic Alert can keep you informed. Those interested can also sign up for alerts on our website at <https://rockportmaine.gov/civicready>

Maine Water Assistance Program:

This is a federally funded program to help support eligible households in having access to drinking water and wastewater utility services. Households will be required to have water liability to be eligible for the drinking water/wastewater program. To receive an application, you can call 888-623-6762 or email water@mainehousing.org.

Rockport Resource Newsletter:

If you would like to receive the Rockport Resource Newsletter via email you can sign up through our website.

Marge Jones Fields:

Spring is fast approaching, if you would like to plan ahead and reserve the use of a field for this year, email rockportrec@rockportmaine.gov.

Reservation Policy:

- Reservations can be made for a single month/month or entire season.
- Anytime when the court is not reserved it is "first come first serve play."
- The usage fee will be \$250 per month, up to \$1000 for the entire season.
- No reservations on Sundays. This day will remain first come, first serve all day.
- Groups that pay the monthly or annual fee may reserve the full court area or half (one tennis court) up to three hours of court time per day each week Monday - Saturday, not to exceed 15 hours total per week. No more than three total hours in a day, and you cannot reserve the same time block for more than 3 days in one week. This allows others to utilize these time slots for first come first serve play.