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## Town of Rockport, Maine

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### Town Manager's Office

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### Jonathan Duke, Town Manager

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## Town Manager's Report & Update April 13, 2026

### **Fiscal Year 2027 Budget**

On March 30<sup>th</sup>, the Select Board finalized their proposed municipal budget which will go before voters at the June election. The proposed budget is decreasing by 0.49% over this current year's budget. The budget came together from a great deal of effort from the Select Board, Budget Committee, and our department heads. The FY 27 budget will be the first budget considered by voters to decrease over the prior year in sixteen years and is a true accomplishment without any reductions in service.

While the municipal budget will be lower for this coming year, impacts from the county and school budgets will have a large role in determining the increase in the property tax rate for next year. At last look, school costs are projected to increase by 2.9% and county costs should increase by 13%.

### **In Lieu of Taxes:**

Many thanks to the Vesper Hill Foundation (Children's Chapel) and Maine Coast Heritage Trust (Aldermere Farm, Beech Hill Connector, and Erickson Field properties) for their payments in lieu of taxes. While these organizations are exempt from paying property taxes, they have chosen to step forward and offset the impact and cost to town services provided by their organizations. Vesper Hill Foundation's \$1,000 and Maine Coast Heritage Trust's \$5600 will help offset tax amounts for all property taxpayers.

### **Town Clerk:**

#### **June Election Ballot Set:**

Among the positions available for election in June are:

2 - Select Board 3-year terms

*Kimberlee Graffam, Michael Thompson, Samantha Appleton, and Darren Robbins*

1 – Select Board 1-year term

*Papers: Craig Mitchell, Linda Greenlaw, Geoffrey Parker*

1 - Library Committee 3-year term

*Papers: Lee Goss*

3 - Budget Committee 3-year terms

*Papers: Bill Bow, Terry Abrams, Richard Mitchell, Clark Doran*

1 - School Board

*Papers: Cricket Fuller*

Absentee Ballots Requests:

Absentee ballot requests are now available. You can access an application online:

<https://absenteeballotrequest.sos.maine.gov/> or call the Town Office and request one for yourself!

Property Tax Due Date:

The second property tax payment due date is this coming Tuesday, April 15<sup>th</sup>!

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:**

Planning Board:

For the June town ballot, the Planning Board has recommended amendments to the Land Use Ordinance, Zoning Map, and Subdivision Ordinance that implement portions of the Comprehensive Plan of 2025. These amendments address Comprehensive Plan Implementation Strategies, E-2, H-1, CC-13, CC-22, FL-1, FL-2, and FL-9. The amendments include definition clarification, a density bonus for the 901 zone district, allowance of a drive through in the 906 zone within 0.5 miles of the Rockland Town line, simplification of the Subdivision Ordinance Review from three months down to one month, and zoning amendments to match the purpose of the district as well as simplifying zone splits over lots.

Building Permit Data:

As a reminder to everyone, our interactive map for permit data can be found on [rockportmaine.gov/planninganddevelopment](http://rockportmaine.gov/planninganddevelopment), under the "Helpful Documents" section, and named Digital Interactive Map. Once here, toggle on Permit Data to see all permits. Click on any pin to find relevant information about the permit. Ordinance Violations information can also be found on this map.

Housing:

For the entirety of 2025, thirty-eight dwelling units were permitted for construction. The code office also issued 22 Certificates of Occupancy which includes the 18-unit apartment complex on 7 Madelyn Ln. Additionally, 5 ADU units were permitted for construction with 1 Certificate of Occupancy issued.

Thus far in 2026, 5 dwelling units have been permitted for construction with 1 Certificate of Occupancy issued, and 3 ADU units were permitted for construction.



This data is coming through our GovPilot permitting software, and the formatting will change over time. But this is information that we wanted to share.

**Police Department:**


Staffing:

With the departure of an officer and an untimely injury to another officer, our department is once again working shorthanded and looking for applicants. Our existing staff are working more overtime shifts to cover the gap, but we have also received some needed support from the Knox County Sherriff's Office to cover vacant shifts in Rockport. We are hopeful we can fill the vacancy soon to reduce our costs as the cost to fill a vacant position is considerably higher.

**The Town of Rockport is searching for a full-time patrol officer.**

Starting pay \$33.18/hr., up to \$41.85/hr.  
Lateral entry, year for year pay and benefits.



- 13 hr - 20 minute shifts, fixed 3 on 4 off schedule
- 25-year Maine State Retirement
- Family Medical, Dental, Vision & Flexible Spending Acct.
- 14 paid holidays
- Night Shift Differential
- Stipends
  - Military
  - Longevity
  - Physical Fitness

The police are the public and the public are the police; the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence. - Robert Peel

**Please submit resume and cover letter in envelope marked "Police Officer" to:**  
**Town Manager Jon Duke, 101 Main St., Rockport, ME 04856**  
**or by email: [employment@rockportmaine.gov](mailto:employment@rockportmaine.gov)**

Complete job description is on our website at <https://rockportmaine.gov/jobs>

### **Public Works:**

With winter on its way out the door, our Public Works department is finally able to begin its spring cleaning. Street sweeping should begin within the next two weeks, and we will be moving around town to clean out catch basins to remove sand and other debris. We have had some washouts along roadsides and hope we can avoid heavy rains to ensure we can replace lost gravel before more material is lost. Lastly, we use this opportunity to straighten signage or repair broken signage that fared poorly on a very cold and snowy winter.

Spring is also brush cutting season and we have made progress on Keller Drive, Warrenton Street, and Vinal Street.

### Warrenton Street Stormwater Project

Farley Inc. will begin work this April on a stormwater management project along Warrenton Street. Catch basins for the project have already been delivered to the site toward a project which begins at the intersection with Route 1 and extends to the large culvert which empties onto the beach. The Pathways Committee reviewed plans for the project which call for the removal of the old sidewalk (which was installed supporting the old post office that previously existed in Glen Cove) to ensure adequate signage and visibility existed to protect the safety of pedestrians and bikers with the sidewalk removed. In a second phase of the project, the large culvert will be addressed to ensure stormwater can safely move through to the ocean and protect the roadway.

### **Library:**

#### Programs:

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

### **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](https://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 remains out of the office, but Deputy Harbormaster Rob Parent has stepped in to fill the void as the Harbor awakens from the winter. The commercial floats are back in the water and the float for the Harbormaster's boat has returned as well. The rest of the floats will be returning to the water over the coming weeks and if you have not yet paid for your mooring... now is the time.

### **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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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.