



The Rockport Resource

Volume 2, Issue 1

January & February 2022

www.rockportmaine.gov



Police NEWS!!

Congratulations to Officer Celjeta Bixhaku of the Rockport Police Department and Officer Lucas Verrier of the Camden Police Department for successfully completing the 18 week Basic Law Enforcement Training Program at the Maine Criminal Justice Academy!

Excellent job by both of you!

We'll all be glad to have you back on Patrol!

Chief Randy Gagne



RES Site Survey

QR Code to complete survey for the RES Site., or go the website at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RESSite>

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**2022
Happy New Year !!**

**Be Safe
and
Be Well**

Town Clerk

By Linda Greenlaw, Town Clerk

FRIENDLY REMINDER REGARDING DOG LICENSES:

Please do not forget to purchase your 2022 dog license. They are available at the Town Office. State law requires that all dogs be licensed upon reaching six (6) months of age or if the dog is adopted within 10 days. You will receive a tag that must be displayed on your dog if it is off your property. The fee to register a neutered or spayed dog is \$6 and the cost for a dog that has not been neutered or spayed the fee is \$11. In order to license your dog, you must present a Certificate of Rabies Vaccination which must show the immunization is effective at the time of licensure and that it has an expiration date and tag number. Dog licenses expire on December 31st of each year.

A mandatory \$25 late fee will be imposed upon all dog licenses renewed after January 31st. If you prefer to do this by mail, please send payment and rabies certificate to our address: Town of Rockport, 101 Main Street, Rockport, ME 04856. If there are any changes in information, regarding you or your dog(s), please call the Town Office at 236-9648, Ext. 1, so we can correct our records

FORECLOSURES: Mature on March 29, 2022. This is for the Real Estate Taxes that were due in 2019 and have not been paid and therefore the property was liened. The 30–45-day notice will be sent on

February 24, 2022. Please call the Town Office with any questions. The phone number is 207-236-9648 Ext. 1.

ELECTIONS: November 2nd, a Special Town Meeting and General Referendum Election were held. We had a total of one thousand, three hundred and eighty-seven residents vote in this election. Of these voters, one thousand and twenty-two were in person. and three hundred and sixty-five voted as absentees. This represents 44% of our registered voters. Thank you to residents that voted, to staff who worked as ballot clerks, and to our moderator for the day. Thank you to the Public Works Department for setting up the ballot booths and for removing them the next day.

Public Works

By Michael Young, Director

As winter now is here, we've been preparing our trucks, sanders, and plows for future storms. As a help to Public Works, during a snowstorm please do not leave your vehicles parked on the road, especially in high traffic areas and around businesses. As of November 15th, a winter parking ban in effect, and on-street parking is prohibited Townwide between midnight and 6:00 am; please remember to get those vehicles moved as we clean up through the night.

HELP KEEP OUR STREETS

CLEAR: As we're entering winter, we would like to remind everyone that is a violation of state law to purposefully place snow, leaves or

other debris into the right-of-way. These impediments can be a safety hazard and actively work against our crew's attempt to keep our roads safe. Plowing across the road can leave snow and ice in the road and leaves blown into the road can plug catch basins and cause unnecessary flooding. We need your help so we can clear our roads and allow all of us to travel safely.

HALLOWEEN STORM RE-

PAIRS: Though it is uncommon at this late date to see road repairs, the damage incurred in the Halloween storm forced some of our repairs to occur later than is optimal. We will have variety of culvert crossings, most notably on Meadow Street, which may cause road closures and impact motorists. Please be mindful of our crew as they work in limited daylight and slow down as you pass our work areas.

NEW PLOWING ROUTES:

Due to staffing changes at Public Works, plowing routes may be serviced by a different tenured driver or a new person that's unfamiliar with a specific route. We ask for your patience as these drivers become more accustomed to these new routes. If there are any concerns, feel free to contact the Public Works Department at 235-6245 or use our website: fixit.rockportmaine.net.

TAKE IT SLOW, BE SAFE. If you must travel during bad weather, we ask you to remember it goes from wet to freezing temperatures or snow, very quickly and you don't always see black ice. We try our

best to get out to sand before this happens to help make the roads safe, but there is a bit of a delay at times. Under a sudden, freezing, quick drop of temperature it can take Public Works time to get called in and to the trucks loaded and ready. Please use discretion with being out in inclement weather and drive carefully.

Finance Update

By Megan Brackett, Finance Director

As you are receiving this newsletter, we are busy preparing the fiscal year 2021-2022 budget. The Town Manager will be meeting with Department Heads the month of January and we will have the Town Manager's budget finalized and to the Budget Committee and Select Board for their review in February. Please see the dates related to the budget review. At this point we are planning that all meetings will be held at the Opera House and will be livestreamed, but that is subject to change depending on the state of the pandemic.

Capital Improvement Plan

The Town Manager has completed and presented to the Budget Committee and Select Board on Monday, November 15th, 2021, this meeting was livestreamed for anyone interested in going back to watch it. The next step of this process was to have the Select Board rank the items included in the Capital Improvement, which was discussed at their December 13th, 2021 meeting. Once the final rankings have been completed, we will post the approved and adopted Capital Improvement Plan to the Town's website.

Important Budget Review Dates: (these dates are tentative and subject to change)

Wednesday, February 16, 2022 – Budget Overview Workshop starting at 6:00 p.m., this will be with the Select Board and Budget Committee, and budgets will be delivered at this meeting.

Tuesday, February 22, 2022 – Budget Review Meeting starting at 6:00 p.m., this will be with the Select Board and Budget Committee.

Thursday, February 24, 2022 – Budget Review Meeting starting at 6:00 p.m., this will be with the Select Board and Budget Committee.

Tuesday, March 3, 2022 – Budget Review Meeting starting at 6:00 p.m., this will be with the Select Board and Budget Committee.

Monday, March 7, 2022 – Select Board Workshop at 6:00 p.m., in this workshop the Select Board will be developing their proposed budget to submit to the Budget Committee.

Wednesday, March 9, 2022 – Select Board Workshop at 6:00 p.m., in this workshop the Select Board will be developing their proposed budget to submit to the Budget Committee. (If needed)

Tuesday, March 15, 2021 – Budget Committee Meeting at 6:00 p.m., in this meeting the Budget Committee will review the Select Board's proposed budget and make formula recommendations on any changes they feel should happen.

Monday, March 21, 2022 – Select Board Workshop at 4:30 p.m., in this workshop the Select Board will review any formal recommendations that were submitted by the Budget Committee, at this workshop they will decide to make any changes or not to their final budget.

Monday, March 21, 2022 – Select Board Meeting at 6:00 p.m., the Select Board will have their final recommendation votes on the municipal budget.

Thursday, March 24, 2022 – Budget Committee Meeting at 6:00 p.m., the Budget Committee will have their final recommendation votes on the municipal budget.

Wednesday, June 15, 2022 – Annual Open Town Meeting at 7 p.m., this meeting is generally held at the Opera House, but may change depending on the pandemic. We will make sure that all voters have ample notice as to how they will be able to vote on the proposed budget.

The Rockport Resource

Rockport Opera House

By Nancy Albertson, Booking Agent

We are currently taking event and wedding bookings for 2022. Spread the word about the beautiful, historic Rockport Opera House to your family and friends who might be looking for a venue for an upcoming family or corporate event. The auditorium seats 350, which includes the balcony. The main floor can seat approximately 120 for a sit-down dinner/banquet or approximately 80 with a dance floor. Add in the amazing acoustics for a band or DJ to round out a perfect space for a memorable event.

Check out our NEW WEBSITE: rockportoperahouse.org. You can find information about upcoming shows and purchase tickets from the homepage. The current rate sheet and specific facility information can easily be found.

We are also creating a subscriber newsletter to keep folks updated with events and happenings and encourage you to sign up from the website or send an email to nalbertson@rockportmaine.gov with your name and email and we will make sure you get added to the email list.

We are putting together a directory of wedding vendors for potential reception clients so if you are a vendor (or know someone) that offers wedding services, please send the information to the same email address above.

Happy Holidays!

Library News

By Ben Blackmon, Director

Come meet Charlie Gluck, the Rockport Public Library's new Youth Services Librarian during one of our brand new children's programs.

On Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. we have our Bouncing Babies Storytime for children ages 0-2. This program focuses on early literacy and baby ASL.

On Wednesdays at 1:30 p.m. we have Sensory Storytime for ages 3-6. This program uses sensory play with bubbles, shakers, scarves, and more.

We are also introducing Crafternoons for ages 4-11 on the first and third Friday of every month at 3:00pm. Check the Library's website to see what each week's craft is. Registration is required for our Crafternoon events call the Library at 236-3642 to sign up!

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN BECOMING A TEEN VOLUNTEER?

We are currently accepting applications for teen volunteers to assist Librarian Charlie in the Children's and Teen Rooms. You can volunteer at the Library if you are 14+ and have a parent/guardian's permission. Stop by the Library to learn more and fill out an application or email Librarian Charlie at cgluck@rockportmaine.gov

New Hours for the Rockport Public Library!

The Rockport Public Library is happy to announce we are expanding our hours. The Library will now be opened from 9:00am to 5:30pm on Saturdays.

The Rockport Public Library Hours:

Monday - Tuesday - 9 to 5:30

Wednesday - 11 to 8:00

Thursday - Saturdays - 9 to 5:30!

We can't wait to see you on the weekend!

Recreation Committee

By Jason Peasley, Staff Liaison

The Recreation Committee wants to take the time to thank those that have donated money to help get the Marge Jones facility back to proper condition for our community. Sports Field Inc. was able to complete full restoration of the Little League field prior to the large amount of rain we have received this fall. Our facility is back on the schedule for first thing this spring prior to any teams starting practices.

The new flagpole base next to the Babe Ruth scoreboard has been installed, with the pole coming in next week. Farley, Inc. completed a fall closure of the irrigation system and will be installing a new control panel and master shut off valve early spring that will allow the water flow to be controlled remotely, which will save up to 50% in our yearly water usage.

A huge thank you to Adventure

Advertising who has replaced and upgraded ALL the signage at the facility. We have been able to get 75% of the signs replaced and will finish in early spring.

I want to also give a big thank you to the Committee Members who have stepped up this year, with the commitment to help the Town by joining the Recreation Committee and meet monthly. We have had three meetings that have produced a lot of work already being completed, with yearly maintenance being scheduled for the next year. It takes a team to make all this happen.

As you know the gate is closed till Spring. You are more than welcome to go and still walk around the fields, but please do not park in front of the gate. There is still construction going on year-round to maintain the fields and we need to be able to get in through the gate.

Assessing

By Kerry Leichtman, Assessor

The Assessing Department, with a strong assist by Linda Greenlaw, in her capacity as Election Clerk, and Library Director Ben Blackmon at the Rockport Public Library, held a very successful Thanks For Giving election day food drive.

As you can see in the photos, as a result of your generosity we brought a few hundred pounds of canned and boxed non-perishable foods and disposable diapers to AIO Food & Energy Assistance, where it will be distributed to people who need it.

The Thanks For Giving food drive was started by Lyman's then Assessor Gina Merry to support Lyman's food pantry. Gina died of cancer a few years later and the Town of Lyman decided to continue the annual food drive to honor her memory.

A few years ago, Gina's husband, Joe Merry, Assessor for the Town of Standish, had the idea to spread the food drive across the state by interesting other assessors in organizing Thanks For Giving

food drives in their communities.

We thought it was a great idea. I called Joe Ryan at AIO. He suggested we include diapers in our appeal and loaned us collection boxes. Caitlin created the posters which Dave Morrison at the Camden Opera House printed for us and then you, the residents of Rockport and Camden, delivered the goods!

Thank you. We hope to do it again next year.



Fire Department

Jason Peasley, Fire Chief

Please check the ice condition before heading out fishing or skating. Ensure you tell someone where you are going, for how long, and try to have a buddy.



The Rockport Resource

Wastewater Update

By: Megan Brackett, Finance Director

As most of you have noticed the Route One Sewer Extension project has been well underway for the past several months. With winter looming in the very near future construction will be taking a winter break, we expect that this will happen the first week or so of December, and will continue until about May, depending on how the winter thaw happens.

If you have interest in connecting to the system, please reach out to the Code Enforcement Officer, Scott Bickford, and he will place your name on the list, and hopefully beginning in May we will be able to provide an update on when we think the new line will be completed and ready for connection.

Rockport Police

By Randy Gagne, Police Chief

The Rockport Police Department Patrol Division is now back to full staff with the graduation of Officer Celjeta Bixhaku from the 18 week Maine Criminal Justice Academy. Officer Bixhaku took part in the demanding, high stress, course of study to obtain her Full-Time certification as a Maine Law Enforcement Officer. Officer Bixhaku has excelled in all areas of law enforcement since she has been with the Department, and we knew she would carry that on through the Academy. On behalf of the Rockport Police Department, we congratulate you, "Jeta", and welcome you back to the department!

With Officer Bixhaku away for 18 weeks of training it was up to the staff at Rockport PD to step up and fill the void. All members worked many hours of overtime and Sgt. James Moore changed his work schedule to accomplish this. I am happy to report that our schedules have now returned to normal, and the officers are getting some regular 40-hour weeks allowing them to enjoy their time off. I would like to thank all of our staff for making this 18-week period pass without any issues!

The department continues its overhaul working with Dirigo Safety to bring all departmental policies to Maine law enforcement accreditation status. This has been a major project that will update not only law enforcement police policies but Bureau of Labor Standards policies as well. We are always looking at ways to do our jobs more professionally and reduce liability to officers and the Town.

Mandy Marriner-Everett has left as the department's Administrative Assistant. This will cause a slight disruption in services for the time being.

Voice mails for the Chief and Officers can be left at 236-2026. Listen to the menu for Officer mailbox options.

Traffic Accident reports can be obtained online at: <https://www1.maine.gov/online/mcrs/> there is a \$10.00 fee.

Concealed weapons permit – Please contact Chief Gagne at 236-2026 and leave a voice mail or

email at rgagne@camdenmaine.gov

All other report inquires- Please leave a voicemail message for Chief Gagne or email at rgagne@camdenmaine.gov

Harbor News

By Abbie Leonard, Harbormaster

Happy New Year! The Harbor has been put to rest after the record setting 2021 season and we already have our eyes on 2022.

Happenings on the Harbor is looking forward to once again be able to host some summer concerts in 2022, so please stay tuned.

For those residents that have moorings/tie-off's in the Harbor, please be on the lookout for your 2022 Harbor bill. You will notice a slight increase across the board. The biggest increase you will see is in the overnight dockage category. This past season, vessels over 50' in length paid a nightly rate of \$3.50/ft. (not including shore power which is an additional charge). At the new rate: vessels under 50' will pay \$2.50/ft- vessels between 50'-60' will pay \$3.50/ft and vessels over 60' will be paying \$6.0/ft. The Harbor Committee feels strongly that this increase will have the biggest impact on Harbor revenue and the least impact on residents.

Thank you for another great season and I look forward to new challenges and improvements in the season ahead.

Winter Parking Ban

The Winter Parking Ban is in effect through April 15. No on-street parking from midnight to 6 a.m. Illegally parked cars may be towed in the event of a snow-storm or if the Police determine the vehicles are posing a threat to public safety.

Planning Department

By Orion Thomas, Planning Director

The Planning and Codes office has a lot in store for the 2022 year. This office has decided on a new software program to help with the organization of permits and Board applications. The role out of this new software will be in the coming months. More information will be published on the Town website's Planning Office page with details and a tutorial video on how to use the program. This new software will allow our office to be more transparent, make information more available, with a few clicks of a button and will free up our time to focus on more inspections, and allow more availability for interaction with the residents and business owners.

For your knowledge and understanding, the Planning and Code's office is taking people by appointment only. Of course walk-ins will still be helped, however our process will be easier to manage with our office being short staffed. Our Administrative Assistant, Mandy, moved on to a better position for her. We wish her the best of luck. For the Code

Hello Rockport residents,

Rockport Forward is a committee appointed by the town to gather data and insights from our citizens for the development of a 10 year Rockport Comprehensive Plan. This plan will help guide town government and committees when making decisions around future growth and policies for Rockport's future. It is very important that we collect opinions and ideas from the widest array of community members possible. To that end, we have built an interactive webpage with various tools to collect your thoughts on Rockport's Future. **Please use the link below to discover all the ways you can participate both in person and virtually.**

<https://planmyrockport.mysocialpinpoint.com/>

Or, scan the QR Code:



Please reach out to Orion Thomas, the Planning and Development Director, with any questions.
planning@rockportmaine.gov
207-236-0989



Enforcement Officer and Plumbing Inspector please call Scott's direct line at 207-706-4071. For the Planning Director, please email at planning@rockportmaine.gov or call 207-706-4070.

We are still working on updating the Comprehensive Plan. All information relating to this process can be found on the Comprehensive Planning Committee page on the Town's website. This committee is still working through the data collected from the SWOT Analysis held on November 9th, and processing data collected from the first survey. There will be additional surveys created and disbursed throughout the Town. These surveys will be located at the link provided on the postcard.

The first survey has been closed, while the committee processes that data. The Ideas Page and Map are still live and can still be interacted with. I do encourage you to participate in every option available, to ensure your voice is heard.

More public engagement events are in the future. If you are interested in being placed on an email list pertaining to only Comprehensive Plan items, please email me asking to do so and I will ensure it happens.

This is the logo created by the Comprehensive Planning Committee. If you see this logo, please read the document. Also, keep an eye out for posters or mail with this logo



Please spread the word to your friends and neighbors in the community about the Comprehensive Plan update and where they can participate. The more people we get involved, the better our community will be for the future.

Do you worry about a loved one who wanders? Join the Wanderer's Program!

The Wanderer's program provides a critical network of real time information including a photograph to Law Enforcement, which assists in locating individuals prone to wander due to Autism, Alzheimer's or other mental/medical conditions. Registration is simple and takes just a few minutes. Come to the Town Office, Police Department or our website to fill out a Client Intake Form.

Animal Control

If you require assistance from the Town's Animal Control Officer, you must call Knox County Dispatch at 236-2027.

Good Morning Camden and Rockport Program

Do you live away and worry about a loved one living alone? Join the Good Morning Camden and Rockport program and have a peace of mind.

The coordinator will call between the hours of 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. and check on your loved one for you and assist anyway they can. If your loved one does not answer the phone for any reason, an Police Officer will go to their residence to ensure everything is okay.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Jeff Sukeforth at the Camden Police Department for more information.

General Assistance

*By Diane Hamilton,
General Assistance Administrator*

Please call for an appointment if you need General Assistance. The application is on the Town's website at www.rockportmaine.gov

Camden Area Christian Food Pantry

128 Mt. Battie Street Camden, Maine, Tuesday 8 a.m. - 11 a.m. and Thursday 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.

AIO Food Pantry

70 Thomaston Street, Rockland, Maine, Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Wednesday 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. One visit per month. Email@aiofoodpantry.org 207-596-1043

For a complete listing of events, please visit the Town's Calendar at www.rockportmaine.gov

Town of Rockport
101 Main Street
Rockport, Maine 04856
Tel: 207-236-9648
Fax: 207-230-0112

Permit #

POSTAL CUSTOMER