



The Rockport Resource

Volume 2, Issue 5

Winter 2022

www.rockportmaine.gov

Town Manager's Report

By Jon Duke, Town Manager

Town Clerk:

Election Results. The November 8th election was one of tremendous turnout for Rockport. Our poll workers were busy from the opening to polls till close at 8pm. All of the items on the municipal ballot passed with margins of nearly 2 to 1 on every ballot question. Of note, the TIF district on Route 90 was approved which will set forth the groundwork for funding a potential sewer line extension to West Rockport, as was the amendment to the Downtown TIF to allow TIF proceeds to fund wastewater treatment needs.

This was the final election for Linda Greenlaw as our town clerk. If you have not already seen the article on Linda forthcoming retirement, please seek it out.

Assessing:

Our Assessing department is still receiving property tax stabilization applications for those over 65 who qualify for the program. All applications are due by December 1st so make sure you have yours in time to be considered for this tax year.

Following the Town's property equalization project last winter, Assessor Kerry Leichtman received three abatement applications since our tax commitment in July and granted a single abatement. On a related note, our Board of Assessment Review recently received training from the Town's law firm at Bernstein Shur to be prepared in the event more abatement requests come forth.

Planning and Community Development:

TIF District Update. With the approval of the amended Downtown TIF and the creation of a new TIF on Route 90, the Planning and Community Development office will be working to seek out grant funding to supplement TIF proceeds in establishing a long-term future for Rockport's wastewater treatment and expand those services to portions of West Rockport.

Comprehensive Plan – "Tour of Rockport." The Comp Plan Committee held three public engagement meetings throughout the Town over the month of September. One each at the West Rockport Baptist Church, Samoset Resort, and Rockport Masonic Center. The intent for this Tour of Rockport was to go to the community to have their voices heard and provide a chance for people to ask questions to better understand the Comp Plan Process and how it plays into a Rockport's future. Each meeting had a good conversation and a decent turn out.

The largest takeaway from these meetings is that the community wants balance across the spectrum This includes balance to ensure Rockport has a resilient economy to weather the economic downturns, balance

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of housing options to ensure a healthy workforce, balance of transportation options so those that live/visit here can choose how they want to see Rockport, and to balance all this with the environment to ensure the most important part of Rockport is forever preserved.

If you were not able to attend any of these meetings and want to contribute to the future vision of Rockport, the survey is still open until the end of October. Use this link to send us your feedback in the survey: <https://planmy-rockport.mysocialpinpoint.com/>

Comings and Goings. Planning and Community Development Director Orion Thomas and I have completed interviews for the vacant administrative assistant position in the Planning and Community Development department and I expect we will have a new hire on board just after the Thanksgiving holiday.

GovPilot. The Town's new online building permit application is now live! Applications can now be submitted online. https://main.govpilot.com/web/public/5b377b7d-c64_Multi-Purpose-Permit-Application-rockport-townme?uid=25963&ust=ME&pu=1&id=0

Appeals. The Town received an appeal for the application from Hope for The Future project at the former medical office buildings along Route 1, the ZBA will be meeting on this appeal on October 12th.

Electric Vehicle Stations Grant. Planning and Community Development Director Orion Thomas will be meeting with Efficiency Maine to take advantage of a new grant program which will fund the cost of electric vehicle charging stations on municipal properties open to the public. Initial costs to purchase these stations however are much higher than anticipated which may limit interest in the program.

MIDC. The Midcoast Internet Development Corporation sent out surveys that will help in their efforts to bring state-of-the-art high-speed internet to all residents and businesses in the area. The survey will have a couple of questions and it will send in your actual internet speed to Midcoast Internet rather than relying upon the often-inaccurate speeds claimed by the larger telecom companies. This data is important and useful in these efforts, and we look forward to your participation. You can also fill out the survey by going to <https://midcoast.vetro.io>

Buildings and Grounds:

The former Ford Explorer police cruiser is now being used to help our Buildings and Grounds staff to travel to and from town buildings and parks. We hope to have a decal for the side of the vehicle very soon. Many thanks to Thomas at Hot Wax on Route 90 for an outstanding job in cleaning the vehicle and preparing it for its new station in life.

Public Works:

Comings and Goings. I want to formally welcome Keith Massengale started on October 24th as our new Heavy Equipment Operator. Keith and his family live in Rockport and he has spent many years coaching with Five Town Football. We are pleased to have Keith on our team.

Project Updates: With paving plants preparing to close, much of the Town's work has begun to shift to winter activities. The Town will be brush cutting on Main Street from Route 1 to the Camden town line, which will be a tremendous challenge not only because of the length of the road but the abundance of growth to cut back.

The more the sunlight our crews can open onto our roads the easier it will be for the sun to assist in clearing snow and ice. The Town will also extend brush cutting to Pleasant Street in a more limited manner.

Obviously, our plans for projects are limited the further we extend into the winter as weather will greatly determine when and where we are working. Our crews are still traveling over their plow routes to check for issues through the season looking for downed limbs, washed out roads, clogged catch basins, or other hazards thanks to Mother Nature. Further, we are preparing our trucks and equipment for the plowing and sanding season.

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 receive whether it is a reminder when property taxes are due to information on an upcoming event at the 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>

Emergency Management Update:

We now stand a year after the storm event which hit Rockport in a tremendously punishing manner, yet we have failed to receive any reimbursement from FEMA. Understandably, this was a unique event, and we are nearly alone in the level of damage incurred in Maine, but the level of bureaucratic red tape thrown at our community to cover the Town's costs to maintain safe roads is unreal. For example, FEMA emailed today to ask for the Town to provide proof from the Army Corps of Engineers as to why permitting was not necessary for our repairs on Porter Street, Hope Street, and Mount Pleasant Street. Any of you who live in these locations likely know the answer to this, but for those unfamiliar with the repairs needed, the damage on those three roads was largely along the shoulder and ditches parallel to the road. There is no water course, no navigable waters; just the side of a road completely washed out and a condition we could not leave alone or run the risk of losing more of the road. Sometimes common sense is in short supply.

Harbor:

Offseason Hours. Though the boating season has ended for many in Rockport Harbor, Harbormaster Abbie Leonard is available for questions and concerns at the Harbormaster's building in the Marine Park during normal business hours.

Holiday on the Harbor. Save the date... this coming New Year's Eve the fireworks will return to Rockport harbor with food vendors, luminaries, and more details to come!

Fire Department:

The department has totaled 183 calls through the end of October with a healthy portion of those calls amount consisting of car accidents.

Training. Our department held a joint training last month with Camden, Lincolnville, and Hope fire departments held in a fire trailer. The joint training provided an opportunity for 9 new firefighters in the region to understand the nature of this work. We, like all of our mutual aid partners, are certainly in need of new fire fighters but thanks to the regional cooperation we have with our partners, these 9 new fire fighters will help us all. For those interested in learning more about joining the fire department, please contact Chief Peasley at jpeasley@rockportmaine.gov

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Finance:

Salary and Personnel Policy Survey. A committee was established consisting of employees, the police union, the public works union, department heads, myself, and representation from the Select Board and Budget Committee to conduct a salary and benefits survey of similar communities in Maine. The group set forth a set of criteria and reached out to 23 similarly sized communities and received 11 responses. The committee met last week and is in the process of reviewing findings, but it is clear significant adjustments in every department will be necessary to ensure we are paying well enough to retain our excellent employees and attract fine candidates when openings exist. The group will meet again this week and share their findings with the Select Board and Budget Committee in a workshop format prior to the next Select Board meeting.

Outsourced Payroll System. The Town is continuing to work with Payroll Management to implement a new payroll system. I expect the initial phase of the roll out of this new system will occur after Thanksgiving and continue through to the first of the new year.

Employment Opportunities:

We have several job openings with the Town of Rockport, stop by the Town Office for an application or call and we can email you an application. Also, job applications are available on our town website, along with a detailed job description. <https://rockportmaine.gov/jobs>

All applications will be accepted until the positions are filled. The Town of Rockport is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

- Public Works Truck Driver/Equipment Operator/Laborer - This position involves manual work in road construction, repair, and maintenance, snow and ice removal, and other seasonal public works projects. A CDL is preferred. This is a full-time year-round position for an anticipated opening in the spring.
- Video Technician – This position primary responsibilities are to operate the video and audio equipment at the Rockport Opera House for recording and Livestreaming meetings and events. This is a part-time year-round position with a lot of flexibility (most hours are evenings with some occasional week ends needed).

Library:

Events. Many events are happenings at the library so please keep an eye on the Rockport Public Library website and Facebook page. We will also provide a list of events in our Rockport Resource Newsletter. Excellent turnout from recent events.

Comings and Goings. We are excited to announce Julia Pierce, our new Deputy Library Director started on October 24th. Julia comes to us from the Camden Public Library where Julia served as Programming Coordinator, and we look forward to Julia's effort to create outstanding events for our residents at the library in the years to come.

Opera House:

Events. Stay tuned to the Opera House's Facebook/Instagram accounts for more updates or the Opera House calendar on the Town's website.

Police Department:

The Town's two new cruisers have finally arrived, some five months later than expected. While car dealership lots are beginning to fill with inventory, the ability for automobile makers to fill orders is still challenged. One of the new cruisers is already outfitted and in service while the second cruiser is in the process of being prepared for use.

Thankfully, the Route 90 paving project is nearly complete for this season, but our officers have been monitoring the situation throughout and keeping an eye in the school zones through the day.

Grant. The Town applied for, and received, a grant for \$3,000 from MMA Loss Prevention to go toward the purchase of Bolawrap technology, which is a safer alternative to tasers. Effectively each Rockport officer would be outfitted with this restraint device which is considered as "remote handcuffs."

Wastewater:

Maine Water Assistance Program. 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 a water liability in order to be eligible for the drinking water/wastewater program. To receive an application, you can call 888-623-6762 or email water@mainehousing.org.

Recreation Committee:

Nearly all of the activities have begun to wind down at the Marge Jones field for the season and we have emptied the irrigation system as a result. We still have a very active pickleball group who are still using the space, but so as to protect the road, we will be closing the gate on December 1, if weather cooperates.

If you want to schedule the use of a field for next year, email rockportrec@rockportmaine.gov.

Rockport Resource Newsletter:

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



Online Services:

Boat, ATV, Snowmobile, Hunting and Fishing Licenses:

<https://www.maine.gov/ifw/fishing-boating/boating/index.html>

Vehicle and Trailer Registrations:

<https://www1.maine.gov/online/bmv/rapid-renewal/>

Burn Permits:

<http://wardensreport.com/index.php#!/frontPage>

Like us on Facebook!

<https://www.facebook.com/rockportmaine>

Town Office Hours:

Lobby Hours are 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.
We are still open till 5:00 p.m. if you need to reach someone by phone.

Wastewater Users Reminder:

If you have a Water Meter on your outside spigot, don't forget to report those numbers to Maine Water to receive a credit on your Wastewater Bill.



Save the Date

Town Clerk, Linda Greenlaw is retiring!
A retirement party for her will be

January 8th, 2023
snow date - Jan 15th



It's that time again when Santa has asked for some help from Rockport Fire during this busy time of year.

We will be assisting with one of Santa's mailboxes in front of the fire station at 85 Main Street.

Santa has asked that all letters be dropped off by **December 15th** to allow time for him to read and respond to the letters.

No Postage is necessary. He has a special mail delivery truck just for his letters.

Thank you and Happy Holidays



Public Works

By: Michael Young, Public Works Director

We have been prepping our trucks, sanders, and plows for Winter. As a help to Public Works during a snow-storm please do not leave your vehicles parked on the road especially in the villages and around the business. There is a parking ban in effect, and on-street parking is allowed until 10 o'clock on Central Street; please remember to get those vehicles moved as we clean up through the night.

As the weather permits, we will continue doing some roadside brush cutting along many of the streets throughout Town. We will, as always, try to respect the trees and brush that are in and along the right-of-way, however, if they are on your property but encroach on the right-of-way and poses a public safety issue, we do have the right to trim them back.

As Fall comes to an end, we would like to remind everyone that like snow, it is not OK to blow your leaves or other debris into the right-of-way, both roadside and sidewalks. Public Works tries to do catch basin clean up and along the edge of curb in the Fall so that the leaves do not fill the catch basins and cause washouts and erosion. If you place your lawn debris in the right-of-way it can undermine this work and refill catch basins we've already cleaned. Please do not leave your leaves or any other debris in the right-of-way.

This Winter, there may be new drivers for some of the plow routes. Routes may be serviced by a different tenured driver or a new person that's not familiar with a specific route. We ask for your patience as these drivers become more accustomed to these new routes.

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 drop in 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.

Harbor News

By: Abbie Leonard, Harbormaster

I hope this finds everyone settled in for Winter and enjoying what that means for you. For those of you with moorings and tie-off's please be on the look out for your bill in the mail and email. Please note that we are moving away from mailing bills and will be utilizing the Online Mooring System to email bills and accept payment. This year would be a good time to familiarize yourself with that process so that it will be a seamless process to go paperless next season. Feel free to reach out with questions on navigating the system and be sure your information and email address is correct in the system as well.



Photo courtesy of Peter Ralston, Ralston Gallery

Save the date!! Saturday, December 31, 2022. Let's ring in the New Year in style with luminaria, a DJ, food trucks, drink vendors and fireworks over the Harbor. What better way to welcome in a New Year!

This is a free event! If you are interesting in participating, please reach out to Harbormaster, Abbie Leonard for details on sponsorship and volunteer opportunities. Please stay tuned to the Town website and the "Rockport Harbor" Facebook page for more details.



Rockport Police Department

By: Randy Gagne, Police Chief

With the holiday season fast approaching a few things to keep in mind. Everyone loves a good old holiday celebration. If you are partaking in events and consuming alcohol or using recreational marijuana use please make arrangements for transportation prior to your celebration. Everyone wants a wonderful holiday which does not include arrest or injury.

Packages delivered and unattended are common targets of Grinches looking to spoil your holidays. Each year we file reports of packages delivered and then stolen while unattended. If possible have package delivery alerts added with your item so you know when they arrive. If you are unavailable to be home when a package is scheduled see if a friend or neighbor might be able to pick up the item or possibly reschedule the delivery date.

We also recommend that gifts and other valuables not be left in your vehicle. This is also the time of year we see an uptick in motor vehicle burglaries. Please do not leave your keys in the ignition. Losing a gift is bad enough, but suppling a get away vehicle will really spoil your day.

In early December Camden & Rockport Police Departments will team up with Hannaford to once again hold the "Fill the Cruisers" food drive at Hannaford in Camden. This event fills our Police cruisers with Hannaford meal boxes that will be donated to local food pantries. Several years ago (before Covid) this event was a huge success. Both cruisers were filled four times. The tentative date is Saturday, December 10th from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

A reminder the Winter Parking Ban is now in effect. No vehicles can be parked on any street or roads during the Winter months. Violators are subject to ticket and tow if interfering with snow removal at the owners expense.

Rockport Police will be conducting impaired operator focused patrols during the holiday season. We will be looking to remove those who operate impaired from our roads before they hurt themselves or others. There is no excuse for operating impaired. If you drive impaired we will supply you transportation to a booking facility for processing and bail. Nobody needs that.



The Rockport Police Department has taken ownership of two new cruisers in coordination with our vehicle rotation schedule. These two cruisers were purchased with funds from the Reserve Account as well as through the general budget appropriation.

A huge "Thank You" to Adventure Advertising for their work in getting these cruisers ready!

Do you worry about a loved one who wanders?

Join the Wanderer's Program

The Wanderer's database 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.

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 Officer will be sent out 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.

The participant applications are available at the Rockport Town Office and the Rockport Police Department.

Winter Weather Tips

- Remove your vehicles from the street. Vehicles parked in the street create a hazard for snowplow operators and do not allow roadways to be completely cleared.
- Do not shovel or plow snow from your driveway or walkway into the street. Pile snow in your yard.
- Some important things to keep in mind if you are on the road during a snowstorm and encounter a plow truck:

Remember to **STAY BACK** from plow trucks so the the driver can see you, Flying debris and snow doesn't hit your vehicle, and so you can stop if the equipment stops abruptly.

- Sometimes plow trucks must stop quickly or back up in the road or at intersections to ensure snow is completely removed from the roadways
- Give yourself plenty of time to get to your destination safety is everyone's priority.

Dog Licenses

All dogs are required by law to be licensed upon reaching six (6) months of age or if the dog is adopted, it needs to be licensed within 10 days. You must license your dog at the Rockport Town Office and receive a tag that must be displayed on your dog if it is off your property.

The fee to register an "altered" dog is \$6 and the cost for an "unaltered" dog 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.

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.

DECEMBER 2022						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31



Business Spotlight

Would you like to be in our Business Spotlight section of our newsletter? Please email dhamilton@rockport-maine.gov or mbennett@rockportmaine.gov.

Tell us a little about your business and yourself; what your business has to offer; hours open and where you are located in Rockport. Pictures are encouraged.

Fresh off the Farm and FatRoll Food Truck

Fresh off the Farm located at 495 Commercial Street, has been in business for 36 years specializing in supporting local, organic and natural products. The original owners, David and Zelma Williams retired in 2018 and Melanie Daigle purchased the business to further the family legacy. In an effort to provide more to the community, over a year ago, Melanie created and maintained a location for food trucks to park for free, and serve their food to the community. When one of the food trucks located at Fresh off the Farm closed, Melanie purchased the food truck and turned it into FatRoll Food Truck, with the help of the rockstars, Tori, the one behind the smoked foods, and Mitch.

FatRoll Food Truck serves breakfast and lunch. specializing in house-smoked local meats and using as many Maine ingredients as possible. FatRoll Food Truck is open from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 am for breakfast and 11am to 3pm for lunch, Monday through Saturday. The owner, Melanie Daigle says "We are still finding our way and finding what works, but the response to our food has been amazing!". Go to FatRoll Food Truck on Facebook for their menu and daily specials.



Fresh off the Farm located at 495 Commercial Street



FatRoll Food Truck, located at Fresh off the Farm
495 Commercial Street

Finance Update

By: Megan Brackett, Finance Director

As you are receiving this newsletter, we are busy preparing the fiscal year 2022-2023 budget. The Town Manager and I 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. Once we have developed a schedule for the budget review meetings, we will ensure that those are posted on the Town website.

The Capital Improvement Plan has been adopted by the Select Board or will be soon. If your interested in what the upcoming capital needs of the Town are, please look at the Finance page of the Town website for more information.

The audit for the prior fiscal year is set to start the first week in December, we are hopeful all the field work will be completed that week and the auditor will be able to get us draft financial statements before the budget process starts with the Select Board. Right now, there is a statewide shortage of auditors available for Municipal audits, and with the federal COVID-19 money that came to municipalities, most are going to have to perform single audits on those funds, which adds more time to completing the audit, Rockport will have to have a single audit performed on these federal funds.

As of the writing of this article, expenditures and revenues are where we would project them to be at this time of year. It is looking like we have the potential for a stormy Winter, which will mean expenses in road material and overtime, this is something that is hard to predict, and we will only know once it has happened. We are set to replace some large equipment this year, but with the vehicle market the way it is currently, we are having a hard time getting prices to replace this equipment. Over the next couple of months, we will work with manufacturers to order this equipment and get it coming, chances are this will not happen before the end of the fiscal year, and we will need to carry over the money for these purchases. It is important that we keep up with these replacements as needed to help stabilize our capital investments year over year.

Recreation Committee

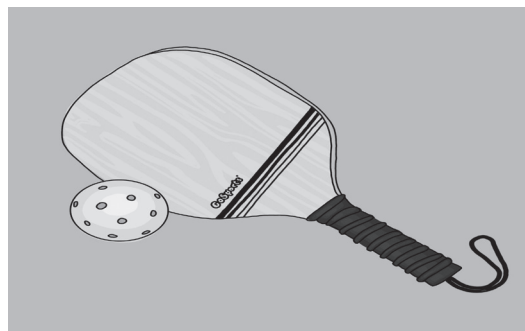
By: Jason Peasley, Fire Chief

It was an absolutely amazing season with great participation at the Marge Jones facility. We will close the gates for the season on December 1st to ensure the integrity of the road stays up to proper conditions and safe for the upcoming Spring opening.

A huge "Thank You" to our amazing Recreation Committee who have spent their time meeting monthly all Spring and Summer to keep the property maintained and ensuring that we have proper funding to keep the facility where it needs to be.

Committee and Alternate Members:

Mike Archer
Brian Fitzpatrick
Jen Roper
Craig Wilson
Barrett Brown
Thomas Kennedy
Tammy Krul



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Planning & Community Development

By: Orion Thomas, Director

Office Update

Reminder: Our Code Enforcement Officer, Scott Bickford, is full-time. If you need a permit, inspection, or have a future project to discuss, please contact our office to make an appointment. Our office is by appointment only, to ensure timeliness of current applications.

Govpilot has been launched. This is our new permit application submittal platform to reduce the paper usage and time constraints. Now you can submit your all purpose permits, Planning Board, and Zoning Board of Appeal applications online through the office webpage at: https://rockportmaine.gov/planning_communitydevelopment.

CivicReady is another tool the Town has launched. This office is using this method of communication for notices of all things related to Planning Board and Zoning Board, as well as future project the Town is working on. If you are interested in staying informed about these items, please sign up at www.rockportmaine.gov/civicready.

Comprehensive Plan Update

If you haven't already, please take our survey for the Comprehensive Plan update. This document is the Town's guiding document for the next decade.

Survey can be found here: <https://planmyrockport.mysocialpinpoint.com/>

The timetable for this Comprehensive Plan is to have a complete version to the voters by November 2023. After the voters approve it, there are a couple more steps with the State before we implement suggested strategies in the updated plan. If you have questions, please reach out to the Planning and Development Director.



Sewer Project

The Town is embarking on solving the sewer issue between Rockport and Camden. The TIF Districts will allow the Town the financial ability to do this, which is going to result in Rockport building our own treatment facility. This facility will be formally known as a Water Resource Recovery Facility (WRRF). This WRRF is a totally enclosed facility, similar to the facility in Lincolnville on the coast side of Route 1. If you have driven North past Lincolnville in the past year, you have driven right past one just like it. If you didn't know this, then this entails my point for what Rockport will be providing the Town with. You will not know it is there unless you go inside one of the chambers. Outside it will resemble a building, that produces no noise or smell. This is truly a state of the art facility, that will allow Rockport to control it's environmental and economic future.

Committee Work

The Planning and Development office currently works with most of the committees at the Town. The most recent committee, the Village Partnership Initiative Task Force, has submitted a letter of intent to apply for grant funding through Maine Department of Transportation to address multi-modal forms of transportation to include bike paths, traffic calming measures, increase walkability from the school to the downtown, and to address the Goose River Bridge. The Town should hear back on this grant procedure soon.

The [Ordinance Review Committee \(ORC\)](#) and the Planning and Development Director are working on appropriate language for the Land Use Ordinance to address the State Law LD-2003. This is a law to increase housing density to promote housing affordability, and additional dwelling units.

Additionally, the ORC is looking at strengthening the Solar Farm Ordinance to protect the environment from harmful chemicals, looking at Zone Districts 906 & 907 to see if these can be made clearer (currently these two zone districts have too many sub-sections). The ORC will also be considering a recommendation from the Public Works Director to amend the ordinance to allow for more affordable culverts, and the ORC will be cross referencing the Ordinance with MDOT standards for State owned roads.

The [CR Pathways Committee](#) has a master plan that the Town is integrating into the Capital Improvement Plan. The pathways proposed in the master plan will be predominately funded through grant funds when they come available.

The [Rockport Elementary School Task Force \(RES\)](#), at time of completion with the New Height Group Conceptual Rendering, made a recommendation for the EDC to review the validity of the next phase for financial feasibility of development.

The [Economic Development Committee \(EDC\)](#) is working on making recommendations to the Select Board on best steps for the RES Site. They are currently reviewing the financial logistics of any development on that site, and what would be enticing for a developer to consider the site for development. The results are not finished yet, at time of this letter.

Grant Work

The Planning and Development Director is working on a Federal Grant and State Grant for additional funding for the sewer project. As mentioned in the Committee Work section, a letter of intent was submitted to work with MDOT for additional grant funding. We should know more soon. This Winter, additional grants will be identified for the Town to pursue. The aim is to bring in as much grant funding as possible for the Town to achieve its future goals without causing any tax burden on the municipality.

Rockport Public Library Community Events

Polar Express Family Event

Wednesday, December 7

5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Families are invited to don on their coziest pajamas and head over to the Rockport Opera House for a special Polar Express-themed event. Attendees will be greeted by the Polar Express conductor; costumed chefs will be serving baked goods and hot cocoa; and one of Santa's elves will be distributing jingle bells. Families will be transported on a magical adventure with a film screening of the Polar Express, a 2004 classic celebrating friendship, bravery, and the spirit of the holidays.



Welcome, Julia!

The Rockport Public Library welcomes Julia Pierce to the staff as the new Deputy Director. Julia served as the Programs Director at the Camden Public Library for the past three years, and has over twenty years of experience working for non-profits and cultural attractions. She has a love of history and is co-founder of a volunteer living history group, which hosts educational encampments in conjunction with the Camden-Rockport Historical Society. She aims to bring a dynamic array of programs to the Rockport community and is excited to get to know the area's lifelong learners. Julia resides in Camden with her husband Benjamin, her eight-year-old twin boys, and an ancient chihuahua.



Winter Book Sale

Friday, December 2 &

Saturday, December 3

8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

The Rockport Public Library will host a huge book sale just in time for holiday gift-giving. The lower-level Rockport Room will be filled with gently used books, CDs, DVDs, and puzzles appealing to all ages and tastes. Volunteers from the Friends of the Rockport Public Library will keep book tables stocked full of fiction, nonfiction, mystery, Maine-themed, exciting "specials", and more! There will be bargains galore, and Annual Friends members will receive 10% off all sales! Proceeds from the book sale will benefit the Rockport Public Library. Only cash or checks will be accepted.



Camden Conference Community Events at the Rockport Public Library

SME Trade in a Changing Global Reality

Wednesday, December 14
6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

The Rockport Public Library, in partnership with the Camden Conference, will host James Wilfong for a presentation discussing international economic restructuring in a time of pandemics, war, and climate change. The last 75 years of liberalized trade policy has been founded on the American model and the superpower status of the United States. A new order is emerging in the 21st century that will challenge American geopolitical and economic dominance. Wilfong will discuss how these factors will affect the future of American small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

James Wilfong has been an international entrepreneur, legislator, educator, and trade and entrepreneurship advisor to the Clinton, Bush, and Obama Administrations. Wilfong and his wife own an American Tree Farm in Stow, Maine where they have raised two children. Wilfong also proudly served as a US Marine.



International Climate Policy and Trade: Cooperation and Competition

Wednesday, January 18
6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Camden Conference Community Events at the Rockport Public Library continue in January with a presentation by Peter Dugas focusing on climate legislation.

The industrialized west is more motivated than ever to rapidly decarbonize their economies to stabilize the climate and protect their national security. Meanwhile, after years of deference, the US legislature has passed significant climate legislation. Learn how the pending Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanisms from the EU and UK will provide both a carrot and stick to move the US to adopt even stronger climate policies which can harvest latent advantages for US business foreign relations. Learn also how we Mainers live in the most influential state in the most influential country on global climate policy.



Peter Dugas is the Maine State Coordinator for Citizens Climate Lobby, a nonpartisan grassroots organization focused on effective and equitable climate solutions. He serves as the liaison to the office of Senator Angus King (ME-I) and is an EN-ROADS Climate Ambassador. Peter has been an active advocate for robust climate policy since earning a degree in Physics and Engineering from Brown University and lives and works in Portland, Maine.



ROCKPORT FIRE DEPARTMENT

POB 142, 85 Main St. Rockport, ME 04856 (207) 236-4437

We are getting close to that time of year where our lakes and ponds will be starting to freeze. We ask everyone to please use extreme caution when stepping foot on any frozen body of water.

Many in our area freeze well before others, and we know people want to start skating and fishing, but please take your time, check the thickness with a buddy and safety equipment before adventuring out on the ice.

Throughout the Winter, its always recommended to continue to check your chimneys, and keep them clean. If you're burning any type of green wood, this can cause a build-up of creosote. If you are unable to check or clean your own chimney there are several great chimney sweepers in our area that can assist you.

Recommended Minimum Ice Thickness
(Rough Guidelines for New Clear Ice Only)

2" or less
STAY OFF!!

4 inches
Ice Fishing

5 inches
Snowmobile

8-12 inches
Car or Small Pickup

12-15 inches
Medium Truck

20-30 inches
ATV

30 inches
Cubota

Department of Natural Resources

Rockport Fire Utility Terrain Vehicle



The UTV arrived a few weeks ago which will greatly help in rescue situations off the beaten path.

The UTV is equipped with a winch, GPS, water tank with a hose and other equipment.



Wastewater Update

By: Megan Brackett, Finance Director

We have several new users of the Wastewater system, and it is always a nice refresher to look at what makes up your sewer bill. Most of our wastewater users are also connected to public water. The public water that comes into your home is metered by Maine Water, if you have a well and do not use public water, your water usage is estimated based on a formula in the Town's Sewer Ordinance. Maine Water will use this metered amount and mirror that reading to your wastewater bill, we figure what comes into the house must come out of the house. There are some instances where you can receive a credit and reduce your billed usage amount, such as a submeter on an outside water spicket that you use to water your garden. This water is not going back through the sewer system, so we do not charge you for that. Once the meter readings have been determined Maine Water will issue the bills to the customers for us, which is why the bill you receive in the mail is from Maine Water and not the Town of Rockport.

The bill is broken into two parts, the first part is the usage just mentioned, the second part is the debt service fee. This fee is passed on to each user or eligible user of the system. The amount you pay is based on the number of equivalent users the Local Plumbing Inspector has determined you have based on the Town's Sewer Ordinance. Wastewater bills are sent quarterly. The payments are sent to Maine Water for processing and tracking. Once a week Maine Water forwards those funds to the Town, and each month we are sent a report that helps us reconcile the wastewater account and budget.

What happens if you do not make your payments?

Unlike some other utilities, we are not able to turn off your service for nonpayment. We also do not have the ability to send your account to collections like some other utility services do.

What do we do when people do not

pay? Unfortunately, the only recourse that we have for collection is to follow a lien process that is outlined by Maine State Statute. This process will start with a review of all the past due accounts with balances that are 90 days or greater. Accounts eligible for a lien will receive a 30-day notice, that states you have 30 days from the date of the letter to pay the past due amount or a lien will be placed on the property. If payment has not been made, in that 30 day window, a notice of lien will be sent to you and a lien will be placed on the property for the past due balance plus fees and interest. From the date of the lien, you have 18 months to pay the balance plus any interest and fees to avoid the automatic foreclosure process, if payment is not made within that 18 month window the Town has the legal authority to take ownership of the property.

Maine Water Assistance Program

The Maine Water Assistance Program 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 a water liability in order to be eligible for the drinking water/wastewater program. Applicants will be required to provide a copy of their current residential water/wastewater bill with their name.

Eligibility is determined is an income-based program. Households eligible for HEAP, SNAP, TANF and SSI will be required to submit an application for the drinking water/wastewater program in order to be eligible for the benefit.

The funds can assist households to reduce water and/or wastewater arrearages, prevent disconnections, and help pay back charges and fees. Any payment will be sent directly to the provider.

Applications are available online at mainehousing.org/mainewater program, phone (888) 623-6762 or by email water@mainehousing.org

Rockport Opera House

By: Kari Luehman, Event Producer/Booking Agent

As Fall quickly moves along and the strangeness we have been living through over the past few years moves into the rearview, we are looking forward to filling the Opera House with community events that bring people together!

For the holiday season there will be 3 family films shown at the Opera House. On 12/3, ELF will be offered as part of the Christmas by the Sea festivities with an “Elf Yourself” craft offering for all to enjoy. Other movies will be The Grinch on 12/10, and It's a Wonderful Life on 12/17. Check the website for movie descriptions and to register for any of these free events.

The Opera House staff are curating a documentary movie series and a local music series to keep us entertained throughout the dark Winter months. Keep your eyes open for upcoming events and be sure to subscribe to the newsletter to get news delivered directly to your inbox!

Save the date for the 1st ever Rockport Donut Festival which will take place June 2-4, 2023. Plan to join us for a weekend of events to welcome Summer and celebrate community! There will be a poster design contest announced soon. Submission guidelines and entry form will be available on the Town of Rockport website.

Ways to connect and support the Rockport Opera House!



Like us on Facebook. Check Facebook Events.

Follow us on Instagram at [Rockport_opera_house](https://www.instagram.com/Rockport_opera_house).

Purchase tickets and register for events on the website, www.rockportoperahouse.org, click on Upcoming Events.

Sign up for our newsletter. Receive a weekly update about upcoming events. Sign up on the website or email Nancy at nalbertson@rockportmaine.gov

Sponsor an event. If you are interested in learning about sponsorship opportunities, please reach out Nancy.

Volunteer. We are looking for folks that would like to volunteer and support some of the Town sponsored events in exchange for a complimentary ticket. Please contact Nancy.

Holiday Films at the Rockport Opera House

Saturday, December 3rd
ELF



Saturday, December 10th
The Grinch



Saturday, December 17th
It's a Wonderful Life

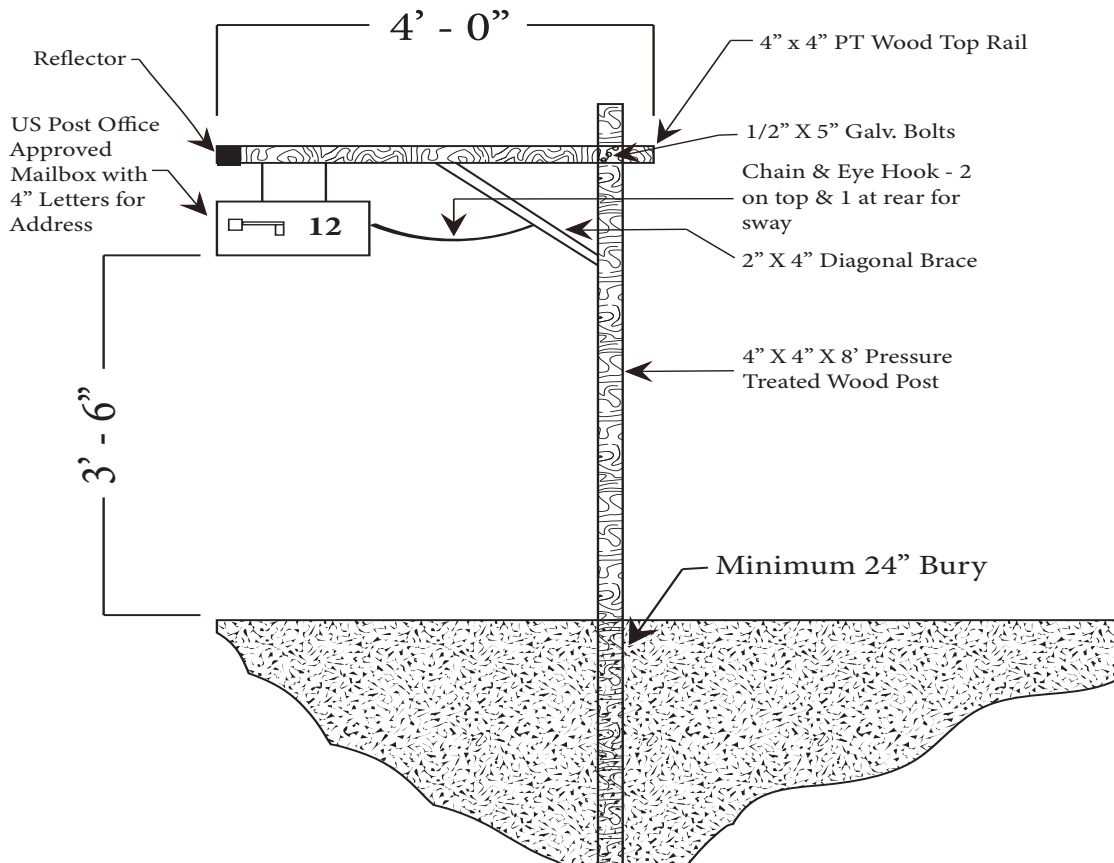


Important Information on Mailboxes

The Public Works Department makes every attempt to avoid mailbox damage during winter operations but sometimes damage cannot be avoided. Mailboxes in the public way and are placed at the owner's risk. Municipalities are not legally liable for any damage or repairs to mailboxes due to plowing operations. However, if a mailbox is struck by a plow Public Works will assist in replacement of the mailbox/post with a replacement of our discretion. If it is deemed that the mailbox was damaged by the snow coming off the plow/wing or the post was previously in disrepair or rotten, it will be the resident's responsibility to replace it. Please call us at (207) 236-6245 if damage to your mailbox occurs.

The Town of Rockport, follows the mailbox practices as outlined by Maine Department of Transportation:

- Place reflective material on the side of the box visible to approaching traffic, also, 4" high letters to identify the address is recommended to assist emergency vehicles.
- Mailbox posts must be sturdy enough to hold up the mailbox in all types of weather conditions, however, they cannot be so rugged that they present a hazard to vehicles that inadvertently leave the road. If a mailbox support is struck by a vehicle, it must easily break away. Recommended mailbox posts include a 4"x4" wooden post, embedded 2' into the ground. Mailboxes should be installed between 41" and 45" high to provide clearance for the plow wing. This allows snowplows to sweep near or under boxes without damage to supports and provides easy access to the boxes for carrier and customer.
- Mailboxes should be set back from the edge of the shoulder regardless of whether the shoulder is gravel or paved. In other words, the face of the mailbox should be at least one foot (1') back from the edge of the normally plowed surface of the highway or the face of curb. Greater offset distances are encouraged whenever possible to allow the mail carrier to get further out of traffic and to further minimize potential damage to your mailbox.



Note:

1. Set your mailbox post so the face of the mailbox is at the back edge of the shoulder or 8 inches from the face of the curb for streets with curbing.
2. Cut notches in the post and top rail to form a cross halving joint and bolt the two pieces together.

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
Tuesday 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
Thursday 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

AIO Food & Energy Assistance

1A Gordon Drive, Rockland
Monday, Wednesday
10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Friday 10:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.
Up to once a week visits.
Email@aiofoodpantry.org
207-596-1043



The Rockport Town Office will have a "Toys for Tots" donation box in the lobby to gather donations. The donations need to be a new, unwrapped gift and it will go to a child in need this holiday season. Please consider donating a gift, we hope to fill the box full of gifts for children in need.

Winter Parking Ban

The Winter Parking Ban will commence on November 15 and extend through April 15.

No on street parking from Midnight to 6 a.m. Illegally parked cars may be towed in the event of a snowstorm or if the Police determine the vehicles are posing a threat to public safety.

Additionally, the Beauchamp Point Scenic Byway, the Glen Cove Rest Area will be closed for the same period.

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