

THE **Rowe Goal Post** May 2023



From the Town Hall Submitted by Janice Boudreau

Rural Focus

Vice-Chair Semanie and Lattended the 'Western & Rural Massachusetts Conference' on April 1st. Though Lt. Governor Kim Driscoll was the keynote speaker, we were really impressed by our Representative Natalie Blais and neighboring Senator Jo Comerford. They instilled a confidence that they are working hard on issues that affect our rural communities. There were discussions about the extreme discrepancy between funding formulas in the eastern versus western part of the state. Of interest in particular was the formulas for funding schools or Chapter 70 Funds, roads or Chapter 90 Funds and state payment in lieu of taxes or PILOT funds that pay taxes to towns for the state owned land.

Hold the Date:

Our Annual Town Meeting has returned to the regular time of 2nd Monday in May or **May 8**th at 6:30 pm starting with a Special Town Meeting followed at 7:00 pm by the Annual Town Meeting at the Rowe Elementary School Gym. We look forward to coming together as a community to vote on important issues affecting the town.

What's New in the FY24 Budget:

General Government-

<u>IT Consultant</u> went up due to an increase in time spent managing 13 workstations, all phones and email accounts. It also includes maintaining the Server and backup systems both on premise and off-premise as well as licensing of software and robust anti-virus and a new enhanced security with encryption and authentication to prevent fraud. We did obtain a \$133,400 grant with the help of Northeast IT, from the Compact Community State Grant to upgrade financial software systems which they will help with installation.

<u>Fuel and Electricity</u> increases were up and we have sought out options for lowering electricity. We went with a fixed rate for fuel which proved a good decision.

Town Administrator position: Eliminating the Executive Secretary position and creating a Town Administrator position has been in discussion for several years. Since most towns have been opting for this distinction, it really remains up to the individual town to determine specific duties. With the announcement of my retirement coming soon and the increase in duties each year, the Board has recommended making the position a 40 hour position. The hope is to attract a strong candidate and offer compensation that is competitive. Of late, it's been challenging to find suitable candidates to come to Rowe. Having Selectmen that work a full-time schedule of their own, it is important to have strong leadership in this role since their work obligations limit their ability to participate.

Maintenance Position: I have been advocating for a maintenance person since I started working here ten years ago. As homeowners you know that your building(s) requires constant attention. Town Hall and the Safety Complex are approaching 38 years now in age and with someone to attend to preventative maintenance, could help mitigate issues. The Library and DPW need help as well.

<u>Gracy House</u>: In the Summer of 2018, a mold issue reoccurred in the Gracy House, to the point where it is a health hazard. I had several experts come out and review the situation, and, I put together a plan to remedy the situation. At a Special Town Meeting this plan was presented, and you voted to spend \$58,000.00 to remedy the mold and add some preventative measures. Following that decision, a Gracy House Committee formed and reviewed the situation in detail. They found that, in addition to the mold issue, the septic system needed to be upgraded to Title V standards, the roof most likely needed replacement and other issues. In FY21, the Gracy House was funded for maintenance such as smoke detectors and electrical service, however, in the fall I winterized the building and shut off the heating since there was not enough in the budget to maintain the heat and it was not in use. In FY22 the Finance Committee opted not to fund any amount to maintain the building. This means that the smoke detectors, which are not rated for a cold building no longer function properly. Of concern is, with no use, there is the potential for fire. When meeting with our insurance agent to renew the FY24 insurance, I mentioned the vacant building with no use and it which changes the way it is insured. They put together a separate policy for the Gracy House alone, with a first estimate of \$11,000.00 in addition to our regular policies for town buildings and property. This brought about the need to address the issue. Selectman asked that I obtain estimates for the demolition of the building and, in order to accomplish this, an asbestos test must be done, which is currently in process. Leaving the building unmaintained, is no solution, it is rapidly deteriorating. A decision and direction is imperative.

Annual Town Reports:

The Annual Town Report for 2022 is available on May 1^{st} at Town Hall. Check out the table next to the elevator.

Town Clerk

Submitted by Paul McLatchy III

The annual town election will take place on Saturday, May 15th at the Rowe School from 10:00-2:00. The last day to register to vote will be May 5th. Vote by mail ballots are still available, but must be requested in writing. The following seats and candidate(s) are on the ballot with the term length in years in parentheses and incumbents marked with an asterisk (*). A specimen ballot is available on the website.

Board of Assessors	(3)	Frederick Williams*
Board of Health	(3)	Daniel Poplawski*
Board of Health	(2)	Kathleen Atwood
Board of Selectmen	(3)	Joanne Semanie*
Cemetery Commission	(3)	Joanne Semanie*
Constable	(3)	Henry Dandeneau*

Page 4

Finance Committee	(3)	Daniel Pallotta*
(x2 Seats)		Loretta Dionne*
Finance Committee	(1)	Marilyn Wilson
Library Trustees	(3)	Rebecca Bradley*
Library Trustees	(2)	Lauren Werner
Park Commission	(3)	Laurie Pike*
Park Commission	(2)	Walter Quist
Planning Board	(5)	None
Planning Board	(3)	None
School Committee	(3)	Susan Zavotka*
Town Clerk	(3)	Kevin Balawick
		Margaret Pallotta

The two Planning Board seats have had no declared candidates and will be filled by write-in votes. Election results will be available the night of the election and will be posted both online and on the main door at Town Hall. Best of luck to all candidates. Once elected, even if you are an incumbent, you must be sworn in by either the town clerk or moderator.

The annual town meeting will be held on Monday, May 8th at 7:00, with a special town meeting held at 6:30. The last day to register to vote for the town meeting will be April 28th.

With this election my time as town clerk comes to a close, with my last day being May 20th (clerks take office one week after being elected). While I would have loved to stay on in this role I have served in for four years, I moved out of town earlier this year. This makes me ineligible as the position remains elected, requiring the person to live in town. I wish the candidates running for this position the best of luck and feel confident that Rowe will end up with a great town clerk after this election.

Projected Potential FY24 Tax Rates and Average Single-Family Tax Bill

Projected potential tax rates and resulting average single-family tax bill—should all articles pass at the **FY24** Annual Town Meeting—are provided below. Prior years' figures are listed for comparison. Rowe utilizes a split tax rate to shift some of the tax burden from Residential to Commercial-Industrial-Personal taxpayers. The split tax rate is determined by selecting a Minimum Residential Factor (MRF). The final MRF is selected by the Board of Selectmen with input from the Board of Assessors at the Classification Hearing in the Fall.

The FY24 projections are based on last year's total town property valuation of \$492,172,756. FY24 is an Interim Update Year and real estate property values are expected to remain fairly stable. A range of potential tax rates is presented below from a maximum shift MRF of **0.5** to last year's MRF of **0.58**.

	<u>FY21</u>	<u>FY22</u>	<u>FY23</u>	<u>FY24</u> (potential range)
Tax Rate - Residential	\$5.33	\$5.33	\$5.18	\$4.83 to 5.60
Tax Rate - Com/Ind/PP	\$8.64	\$8.69	\$9.48	\$10.38 to \$10.26
Avg Single-Family Tax Bill	\$1,166	\$1,397	\$1,370	\$1,278 to \$1,481

Note: To calculate your potential **FY24 tax bill**, divide your property's total valuation by 1000, then multiply by projected FY24 residential tax rate. Your current property valuation can be found on your FY23 tax bill <u>or</u> from the FY23 property value listing on the Assessor's page on the town website (rowe-ma.gov).

Comparison to Other Towns

The following table compares last year's (**FY23**) residential tax rates, average single-family home values, and average single-family tax bills for some of our neighboring towns, and for Weston—the highest town in MA. [Data source: MA DOR Municipal Databank]

Town	Residential Tax Rate	Average Single Family Home Value	Average Single Family Tax Bill
Hancock	\$ 2.68	\$ 293,196	\$ 786 (lowest in MA)
Rowe	\$ 5.18	\$ 264,515	\$ 1,370 (2 nd lowest)
Florida	\$ 8.46	\$ 183,036	\$ 1,548 (3 rd lowest)
Monroe	\$ 11.51	\$ 136,351	\$ 1,569 (4 th lowest)
Erving	\$ 8.00	\$ 238,352	\$ 1,907 (5 th lowest)
North Adams	\$ 17.67	\$ 194,714	\$ 3,441
Colrain	\$ 19.63	\$ 216,145	\$ 4,243
Hawley	\$ 16.66	\$ 256,436	\$ 4,272
Shelburne	\$ 13.65	\$ 326,021	\$ 4,450
Heath	\$ 22.88	\$ 198,774	\$ 4,548
Charlemont	\$ 20.63	\$ 225,044	\$ 4,643
Buckland	\$ 16.94	\$ 290,561	\$ 4,922
Ashfield	\$ 17.61	\$ 284,091	\$ 5,003
Greenfield	\$ 19.65	\$ 258,317	\$ 5,070
Weston	\$ 11.84	\$ 2,017,970	\$ 23,893 (highest in MA)

Page 6



Rowe Town Library News Submitted by Molly Lane, Library Director

> HOURS: Tuesday 10-5 Wednesday 12-8 Thursday 3-7 Saturday 10-3

Lots of fun going on at the library. Stop by and check out our newest addition to the library, Rowe Town Library : The Seed Library. Come and browse our current inventory of seeds and take what you need. Envelopes are provided. We ask at the end of the season you collect some seeds and give back to our library for next year's selection.

Programs:

Thursday May 4th@ 6p.m - Community Planning Group meets, all welcome

Saturday May 6th @ **3-5 p.m** - Sketch Session- Join us for another sketch session. We'll start with a quick drawing skill demo then set you off to practice or freestyle your own thing. There will also be still life props and creative prompt cards to help if you don't know what to draw.

Wednesday 10th @ 6 pm - Nerd Night Game Night - Games to be played will be Magic the Gathering. Every other month we will play MtG and the odd months we will play a new cooperative, tabletop game with elements of fantasy, sci-fi, and a strong element of storytelling

Saturday May 20th@ 10-12 p.m - 5th annual Plant Swap - drop off plants, containers, seeds and pick up what you find..

Wednesday May 17th @ 3:30 pm- Book Chat - River Sing Me Home, by Elleanor Shearer

Library Trustee meetings are held @ 10am on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. All town residents are welcome to attend.

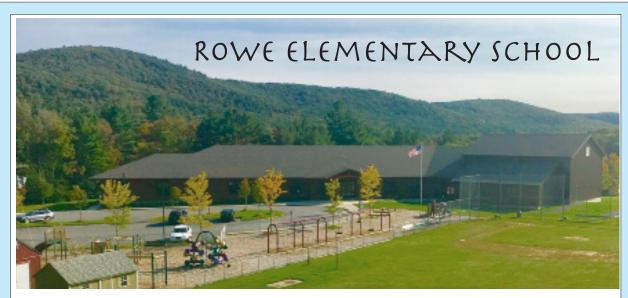
Contact the library if you would like to be put on our email notifications for programs Rowelibrary@gmail.com

Rowe Town Library 5th Annual

0

PLANT SWAP

Saturday, May 20th 10 a.m-12p.m. Swap plants, seeds, containers .Anyone can come and participate, no need to drop off to pick up.



April at the Rowe School usually means three things: family conferences, lots of work in and out of the classrooms, and vacation. Conferences were the last three days of March this year, and were well attended. Many of the conferences in the 3/4 and 5/6 classes were student-led, where the students share their progress and interests. All the classes have been working on a variety of academic and artistic projects, I encourage you to check out the Rowe School Community Facebook page for so many great pictures of the students and their work. The classes are getting outside as much as possible, especially the 3/4 class in their outdoor classroom at the top of the hill behind the school. MCAS also started in April.

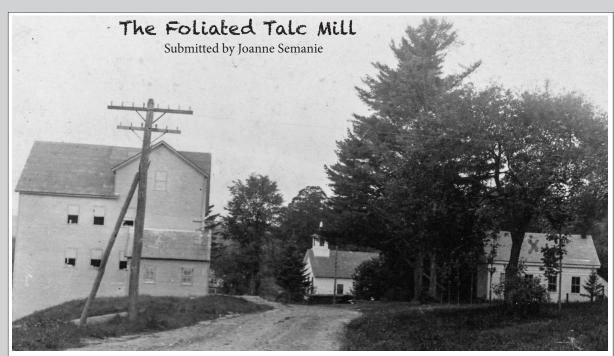
May will mean more schoolwork, inside and outside the school. Both the 3/4 and 5/6 classes will continue the MCAS tests with Math tests in May, and the 5th grade will also take the Science MCAS. Town Meeting is happening in early May. Every year we appreciate the support shown by the Town of Rowe for the school at Town Meeting, allowing us to offer a high-quality academic, social, emotional, and physical education to the Rowe students. If you have questions on the budget before Town Meeting, please call me at the school.

Before you know it, June will be here. We will be bringing back some traditional end-of-the-year activities like Field Day this year, graduation is scheduled for Tuesday, June 27, and the last day of school for students is also that Tuesday. Here's hoping the 2023-2024 school year will be even more of a return to normal for all of us. The Spaghetti Supper will return on Thursday, May 11.

If you have questions or concerns, please call me at 413-512-5100. You can also email me at wknittle@roweschool.org. I look forward to hearing from you.

-Submitted by Bill Knittle





Talc grinding mill across the road from the village school (now museum).

This large grinding mill had a capacity of 40 tons per day. The finished talc was hauled to the train station in Zoar. Waterpower was supplied by a 170-foot metal flume from the Mill Pond.

A news article in 1918 says that talc teams with heavy loads – some as much as 5 tons – were hauled to Zoar by Edgar Pike, Leon Woffenden and Warren Liese with double teams and A.A. Shippee with three double teams. Business was good for a number of years but in 1919 the Foliated Talc Company was sold to the Mineral Products Company of Boston. Nothing developed



Water power conduit for the talc mill.

in subsequent years. By late 1919 the mill was closed. Although varied attempts were made to restart it, in 1925 the dam on Pelham Lake was condemned and the gates opened. Percy Brown came into this picture in 1927 (see April 2023 Goalpost).



To supply a constant head of water a dam was completed in 1906 on the reservoir that formerly supplied the Satinet Factory which is now Pelham Lake.

A.A. Shippee standing on Pelham Lake dam.

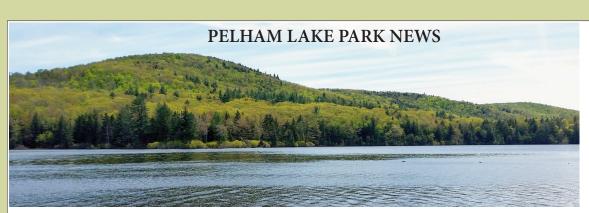
View from behind home of Henry Dandeneau on Zoar Rd.



View from south facing hill off of Kings Highway.



When I am driving down the road towards the museum, I simply cannot wrap my head around the size of the mill building. It dwarfed everything around it. Did the noise disrupt lessons at the school? How many people did it employ? More questions to research but enjoy these photos.



Summer Employment

Just a friendly reminder to get your applications in for summer job opportunities at the park. We will be extending the deadline till Friday June 2. The Park will once again take over the Summer Youth Employment (Grasshopper Program) which gives the park the ability to offer more summer jobs to the youths in Rowe.

AR Class 1, 18yrs and older AR Class 2, 18yrs and older AR Class 3, 16yrs and older AR Class 4 14yrs and older PT Ranger, 18yrs and older Lifeguard, 18yrs and older Rec Director, 18yrs and older Rec Assistant, 18yrs and older Rec 2 nd Assistant (2 positions), 14yrs and older

REC DIRECTOR WANTED!!! This position is \$25.00/hr and runs from July 10-August 17, Monday-Thursday 9:30-2:30.

Please contact the Park (413-339-8554) if you are interested or have questions about any of the jobs.

Tennis Court update:

CD Davenport will start the demolition portion mid-May, once this process begins, the Tennis Court Trail will be closed until construction is complete (Mid July). Please stay off the trail until this project is completed.

-Submitted by Sean Loomis

Rowe History Hikes: Old Readsboro Road with Nan Williams

When: May 27, 10 am

Where: Meet at 189 Potter Rd. (park in field across from barn)

Rowe History Hikes is a monthly, summer hike series exploring the natural and cultural history of Rowe. This month, join historian Nan Williams for a walk along the Old Readsboro Road in North Rowe looking for signs of human habitation - old apple orchards, stone walls, lanes and cellar holes. We will search for evidence of an unknown dwelling mentioned in the old deeds but not yet found on the property and visit the Wheeler/Wilcox cellar hole pictured here. This hike will be mostly off-trail or on an unmaintained trail, ~2-3 miles round trip, moderate.

For any questions, contact Dana Williams at dmwilliams237@gmail.com or on the Rowe Historical Society facebook page.



photo by Nan Williams

On behalf of the Danek family house fire, we would like to thank first and foremost the responders, Rowe fire department and the surrounding towns that came to fight a house fire in our little town was truly humbling. The Fire was put out real fast, so some of the house was savable. We lost all our contents, but when a tragedy happens, you realize what matters, family. Then this small town community showed so much support how could we not be okay. We are beyond blessed and want to express our deep gratitude. We are in the process of rebuilding our home up here on the hill in Rowe and can't wait to update you when finished.

Many thanks , Tom, Helen, Hailey, Reese, and Maggie

Watch out for ticks!

Spring is here and so are ticks! Ticks can transmit diseases to humans when they bite; the longer a tick remains attached to the skin, the higher the likelihood that it may spread bacteria that cause tick-borne illnesses.

Around 2018, more than 34% of local deer ticks tested positive for Lyme and more than 5% for anaplasmosis, the two tick-borne diseases occurring most frequently in the Franklin County region. Although only deer ticks (aka black-legged ticks) can transmit Lyme and anaplasmosis, other ticks should be avoided because they can transmit less common diseases.

Luckily, there are many things we can do to prevent tick-borne diseases:

- When outdoors, stick to hiking trails, wear light-colored clothing (to see ticks) and tuck in loose ends.

Make a habit of checking yourself, your children, and pets for ticks after coming inside. Think like a tick: ticks often hitch a ride after physical contact with brushy plants—start by checking feet, ankles, legs and groin, then work your way upwards.
Use tick repellents, like DEET (designed for skin) and pre-treat clothing, including socks and shoes, with permethrin (not to be put on skin). Permethrin is invisible and odorless and stays effective in fabric through many washings. Using both repellents together is recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Department of Defense (DOD).

Find more prevention information at mass.gov and at tickencounter.org.

If you have been bitten (the tick is attached to your skin), remove the tick with finetipped tweezers. Grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible, and pull with steady, even force. Wash the bite area and continue to check for several weeks; if you develop flu-like symptoms or a rash, see a doctor.

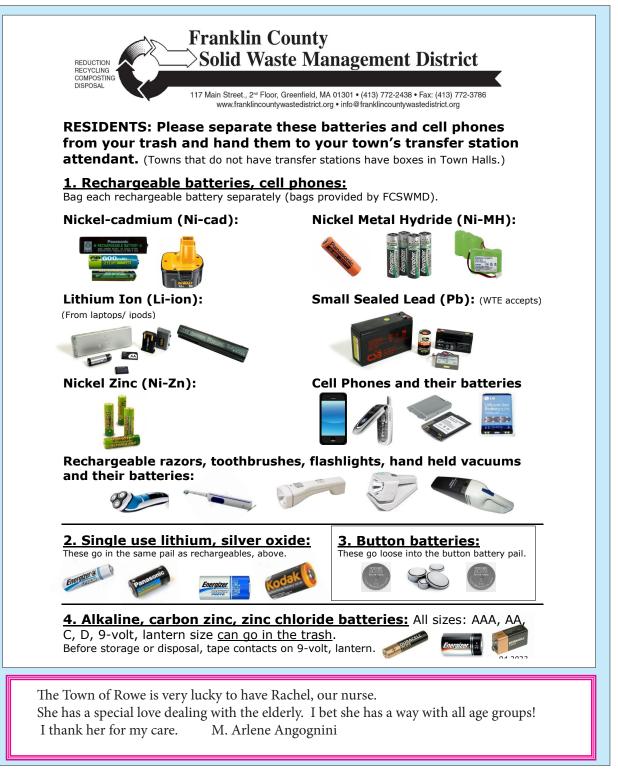
Identify ticks at http://www.tickencounter.org



MAY is BLOOD PRESSURE month- Come to the Town Hall and get your BP checked by the Town Nurse <u>EACH WEEK</u> in the month of May and be entered into a raffle to win a Gift Basket! (1 raffle ticket per week, up to 4 chances to enter in the month of May)

Submitted by the Town Nurse







Time: 5:30-7:00pm Location: Rowe Elementary School

Price: Only \$5 per child, \$8 per adult, or \$25 per family

5th and 6th-grade students will have advance tickets to sell, and tickets will also be available at the door.

Can't stay for dinner? *Takeout is available.*

Come to support our students, but make sure you stay for the cake!

Council on Aging

The COA hosted the first ever "Third Thursday Coffee" on April 20th. We would like to thank Kathy Atwood for providing delicious homemade apple brownies!

We encourage all senior residents to come and enjoy fresh coffee, snacks and great company at the Town Hall on the third Thursday of each month!

Upcoming dates:

-Thursday May 18, 2023 from 10am-12pm -Thursday June 15, 2023 from 10am-12pm -Thursday July 20, 2023 from 10am-12pm



SAVE THE DATE!



AND DON'T FORGET **3RD THURSDAY COFFEE MORIZING: EACH 3RD THURSDAY OF THE MONTH, GRAB A FRIEND (OR NOT) AND HEAD TO THE CONFERENCE ROOM AT TOWN HALL TO ENJOY COFFEE, TEA, AND SNACKS WHILE YOU CHAT WITH YOUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS! **

Respectfully Submitted, Council on Aging Brooke Shulda, Member





Come get your BP checked by the Town Nurse WEEKLY in the month of MAY and be entered into a raffle draw for a chance to win an amazing GIFT BASKET! (Up to 4 chances to enter)

From May 1st until May 25th*

Page 18

News & Notíces

Spring has sprung in Rowe! The grass is already greener, the daffodils are blooming, Pelham Lake's ice is gone and the birds are singing their melodious tunes. Since we had so much snow left on the ground during the beginning of April from that unbelievable March snow storm, our roadside cleanup was postponed until now. So if you are so inclined to help with picking up the winters' trash and recyclables to improve our town's appearance, have at it!! If most folks cleaned their roadside property lines, what a difference it would make. Thanks so much from the Beautification Committee. We greatly appreciate the efforts of our Rowe friends.

submitted by Cindie Stetson



Calendar

This month you'll see a calendar insert showing events happening around town. If you would like to add anything to the calendar, contact Joanne Semanie at dogmom256@gmail.com

Rowe Community Church

Submitted by Ros Mullette

- May 7 Praise Service & Observance of The Lord's Supper
 - 14 Praise & Worship Service
 - 21 Praise & Worship Service
 - 28 Praise & Observance of Memorial Day

Remember Memorial Day

May Birthdays

1 - Sarah Hettlinger 1 - Laurie Sutherland 2 - Eliakim Simpson 2 - Ashley Boyd 4 - Evelyn Dandeneau 4 - Jennifer Rice 4 - Kelley Prendiville 6 - Caitlyn Semanie 6 - Kelle Ouist 6 - Thomas Danek 7 - Jocelyn Brown-Hall 7 - Morghan Jolly 7 - Morgan Roccio 8 - Lisa Miller 9 - Hailey Larned 11 - William Cowie 12 - Robert Beaumier 13 - Richard Polhemus Ir. 14 - Timothy Bjork 14 - David Dvore 16 - Sarah Stine 16 - Sa Rea Smith 16 - Sierra Upton 16 - Diane Cowie 18 - Jessica Albrecht 18 - Enid Gallaghar 19 - Janet Cowie 19 - Camden Cousineau 20 - Deborah Lively 22 - Julie Shippee 23 - Richard Grieco 24 - Izaya Paige 25 - John Packard 25 - Geoffrey Cirinna 25 - Thomas Houghtaling 26 - Edwin May 26 - Barbara Gottesman 26 - Bill Baker 27 - Jennie Sutherland 27 - Benjamin Sherman 31 - Michael Laffond 31 - Abigail Lively

16.

Town Servíces <u>Town Main Line at 413-339-5520</u>

Position/Dept.	Ext #	Email Address	Hours
Admin Assistant	101		
Assessors Office	104	assessor@rowe-ma.gov	Wed 8-1 or by Appt
Board of Health	105	boh@rowe-ma.gov	Tues 8-1 Clerk
DPW	111	dwphighway@rowe-ma.gov (339-5588)	<u>)</u>
Executive Secretary	100	townadmin@rowe-ma.gov	<u>Mon-Thurs 9:30-5:00</u>
Fire Dept	112	firechief@rowe-ma.gov (339-4001)	
Fitness Room	149		
Library	114	rowelibrary@gmail.com Tues: 10-	-5 Wed: 12-8 Thu: 3-7 Sat: 10-3
Park	110	parkmanager@rowe-ma.gov (339-8554	<u>.)</u>
Police	113	policechief@rowe-ma.gov (339-8340)	
Post Office	(413) 3	39-5390 Mon-Fri: 12:15-4:15, Sat: 8:30-11	:30
Tax Collector	106	collector@rowe-ma.gov	Mon-Wed: 9:00-5:00
Town Accountant	102	accountant@rowe-ma.gov	By Appt.
Town Clerk	103	townclerk@rowe-ma.gov We	ed: 6-8:00pm or by Appt.
Town Nurse	107	nurse@rowe-ma.gov Mon: 8-4, W	Ved: 10-6, and Thurs: 8-4
Transfer Station	(413	3) 339-0216 Sat: 8- 2:00pm, Sun: 8- Noon,	<u>, Wed: 7 -10am & 4 - 7pm</u>
Treasurer	108	treasurer@rowe-ma.gov	<u>By Appt.</u>
School	(413) 5	12-5100	

Town Hall is open for normal business hours 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday-Thursday

Please contact Executive Secretary at: (413)339-5520 ext. 100 for appointments whenever possible.

Seasonal resident MUST notify the Executive Secretary of any change in address.

The Rowe Goal Post P.O. Box 462 Rowe, Masachusetts 01367

The Rowe Goal Post

Available on the Town's website (https://rowe-ma.gov/p/64/Rowe-Goal-Post) the first of every month with paper copies sent out by mail the first week

Published by the Board of Selectmen 'in the interest of information exchange between all departments and all Rowe citizens.'

All submissions for the next issue are due by the 25th. Any articles received after this time cannot be guaranteed that they will appear in the next issue.

> Please e-mail all items to: GoalPostEditor@gmail.com

Please send only high resolution images (do not resize).

If you have a question about your subscription or want to make a change to the mailing list, please contact the Town Administrator at: (413) 339-5520 x100 admin@rowe-ma.gov

Seasonal residents MUST notify the Administrator of any change in address.