

THE RYE CITIZENS' HANDBOOK



How the Town of Rye, New Hampshire Works *Its Boards, Commissions, Committees and Departments*

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Experience a fresh approach to continuing care, without leaving the home you love.

At Home By Silverstone Living is a not-for-profit Continuing Care at Home (CCaH) program for adults 62 and older. Proudly serving the Seacoast Region and beyond, At Home helps you plan for future care while continuing to live independently in the home you love.

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Start Planning Your Future.

Call: 603.589.4143

AHBSL.org



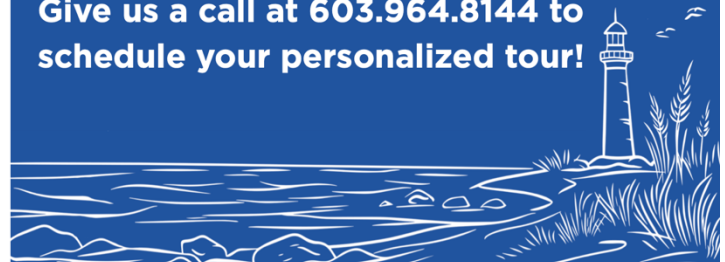
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At Webster at Rye, exceptional care meets coastal charm. Nestled in beautiful Rye, NH, our community offers **assisted living, memory care, nursing care, and skilled rehabilitation**—all with warmth, dignity, and a personal touch.

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Whether it's recovery, long-term care, or everyday living—**Webster at Rye is where quality care and vibrant living come together.**

Give us a call at 603.964.8144 to schedule your personalized tour!



**795 Washington Road, Rye, NH
603.964.8144 | WebsterAtRye.com**

RYE EMERGENCY & NON-EMERGENCY CONTACTS



RYE EMERGENCY & NON-EMERGENCY CONTACTS

EMERGENCY: DIAL 911

For all other questions or inquiries
(including accidental & false alarms),
please contact the applicable non-emergency
number, or visit the links below.

RYE POLICE

(603) 964-5522

ryepolice.us

RYE FIRE

(603) 964-6411

ryenh.gov/270/Fire-Department

POISON CONTROL

(800) 222-1222

poison.org

PUBLIC WORKS

(603) 964-5300

ryenh.gov/354/Public-Works

TOWN OF RYE

(603) 964-5523

ryenh.gov

ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook is published by the Rye Civic League to help residents understand how Rye's town government works and how to participate in it. It is updated periodically to reflect changes in town officials, procedures, and contact information.

The Rye Civic League is a 501(c)(3) volunteer organization which serves the community in numerous ways, including a monthly e-newsletter (see the next page to sign up), an annual Warrant Article and Budget presentation with charts to simplify the complexities of setting the tax rate. The Rye Civic League also hosts a Candidates' Night forum each election season to introduce the State, Local and Federal candidates, as well as Rye Town and School Board candidates each March. Additional meetings and events are offered when important town matters arise.

Members of the Rye Civic League welcome your questions about town government and you can reach out at our email Civicnews@RyeCivicLeague.Org.

NOTE: Although this handbook contains information about legal requirements and provisions to assist in understanding the workings of Rye's Town government, it does not constitute legal advice and should not be relied upon in any particular case for that purpose. The phone numbers, positions and dates all relate to the circumstances in the Town on May 31 2025. Some facts may have changed since that date which may require consulting the updated version of this Handbook online at www.ryecivicleague.org. and on the Town of Rye website: www.town.rye.nh.us The Handbook is updated by Rye Civic League. If you note additions, deletions or corrections which should be made please send them by email to: civicnews@ryecivicleague.org

STAY INFORMED: SIGN UP FOR THE RYE CIVIC NEWS

The Rye Civic League offers all Rye residents a free monthly email publishing top ten news highlights, upcoming events, and key points from Boards, Committees, and Commissions, along with links to recorded town meetings, minutes, and other town activities.

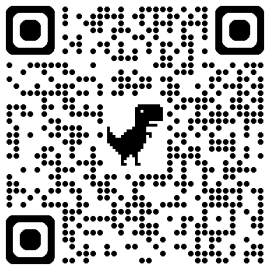
If you have household members, including adult children who still vote in Rye or stay connected to town life, encourage them to sign up too. Everyone in your household who wants to stay informed can subscribe individually.

Sign up:

Email: Civicnews@RyeCivicLeague.org

Visit: www.ryecivicleague.org

Or scan the code below:



UNDERSTANDING RYE'S GOVERNMENT

This section explains how Rye's government is structured, how residents participate in Town Meeting, and how major decisions get made.

In this section:

- Introduction
- Overview: Town of Rye
- "SB2" Form of Government
- Warrant Articles
- Understanding Your Rye Tax Bill
- The Deliberative Session
- The Rye Master Plan
- How to Run for Elected Office
- Revised Statutes Annotated (RSAs)

INTRODUCTION

This handbook has been created to help Rye residents and business owners better understand how our town is run.

Each board, department, committee, and commission in Rye has a responsibility to the people who live here. Rye is a small coastal town where civic decisions about land, water, roads, schools, taxes, public safety, wellbeing and more affect our lives directly on a daily basis. These decisions are made by elected boards, appointed committees, and public bodies that meet regularly and are open to every resident.

If you have not attended a board meeting before or made a public statement, this handbook will be helpful by showing where decisions are made and how you can take part in making them.

Rye's governance works better when informed and engaged residents are involved. The Rye Civic League is committed to continually improving this handbook each year to help residents better understand and participate in our town government. We welcome your suggestions and ideas for making it even more useful.

You can access the web version of The Rye Citizens' Handbook here:

https://ryecivicleague.org/?page_id=10



OVERVIEW: TOWN OF RYE

The Town of Rye is located on the Atlantic Ocean, and its eight miles of coastline is the longest in NH. Three magnificent serpentine beaches, created by rocky headlands, have drawn people to the town for centuries. There are 850 acres of salt marsh and, with all the freshwater marsh, almost two thirds of the town's 35.5 square miles is water. The four southern-most islands of the Isles of Shoals, located six miles off the coast: Star, Lunging, White and Seavey, are part of Rye and are rich in history and culture. There are several ponds, some lovely open fields, many acres of privately owned forest and 2000 acres of public and conservation land gained through purchase, donation and conservation easements.

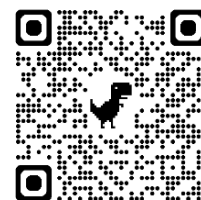
The land of Rye was originally inhabited by native peoples for over 12,000 years. The European settlement in 1623 at Odiorne Point (called Pannaway) was the first in what would become New Hampshire. Later it was called Sandy Beach until 1726 when it became the Parish of Rye and in 1785 it was granted independent town status. Rye has been governed by a Select Board since 1726 where the first board included Joseph Philbrick, William Locke, Joseph Locke, Richard Goss, John Garland, William Seavey Jr., and Richard Jenness.

The town's history is rich in fishing, farming, and ocean side resorts including hotels and boarding houses. Rye's strategic location has put it in the nexus of change in American history by its proximity to Portsmouth, commerce in all directions and several international connections, including the location of the first successful trans-Atlantic undersea telegraph cable in 1874. The natural beauty of the town and the historical significance of its built environment continue to beckon people.

The population in 2020 was 5,500. Over 200 residents volunteer to serve on town government and non-profit boards. Organizations such as the Rye Civic League and the Rye Historical Society provide strong community connections. Voters have consistently supported the preservation of open space, wetlands ecology and historic buildings.

Written by Alex Herlihy, Rye Town Historian.

For more on Rye's history, scan the code below or visit ryehistoryrocks.com.



“SB2” FORM OF GOVERNMENT

What is it?

SB2 (Senate Bill 2, also called the "official ballot" form of government) is the system Rye adopted in 1995 to replace the traditional town meeting, where a single in-person session handled both deliberation and voting, often with low attendance. SB2 aims to raise participation by splitting the town meeting into two events: a Deliberative Session, where warrant articles are discussed and can be amended, and a later Election Day, where voters cast a secret ballot at polls open all day.

Why does it matter to me?

This is the system that determines the town budget, zoning changes, and every elected position in Rye. It also means your vote and your voice happen at two different times and places where showing up only on Election Day means you missed the chance to amend anything at the deliberative sessions.

How does it work?

Warrant Articles and the budget are posted publicly by the last Monday in January. They're discussed and can be amended at the Deliberative Session. The final, possibly amended, versions go to a town-wide vote by official ballot on Election Day.

Where do I go from here?

To participate in deliberation and amendments, see *The Deliberative Session* section. To see how a specific proposal becomes a Warrant Article, see *Warrant Articles* section. To run for one of the positions above, see *How to Run for Elected Office* section.

Positions elected on that ballot:

Selectman (3 years)	Town Moderator (2 years)
Town Clerk/Tax Collector (3 years)	Treasurer (3 years)
Cemetery Trustees (3 years)	Supervisors of the Checklist (6 years)
Library Trustees (3 years)	Trustees of the Trust Funds (3 years)
Budget Committee (3 years)	Planning Board (3 years)
School Board (3 years)	School Clerk (3 years)
School Moderator (2 years)	Sewer Commission (3 years)
School Treasurer (3 years)	Zoning Board of Adjustment (3 years)

WARRANT ARTICLES

What is it?

A Warrant Article is a specific proposal such as spending, zoning, a building code, a town policy and is placed before voters for a March decision. The Select Board prepares the Warrant, the full list of Articles going to a vote. Most Articles originate from the Select Board or Planning Board (zoning changes) and don't require petition signatures.

Why does it matter to me?

Any registered NH voter can put a proposal on the Warrant directly, without going through the Select Board or Planning Board. This is the direct route for a resident to force a town wide vote on an issue.

How does it work?

Citizen petitions require signatures from at least 25 registered Rye voters or 2% of the voter roll, whichever is less.

Warrant Articles and budgets are posted publicly by the last Monday in January. The preceding Friday is the last day to get a petitioned warrant article submitted. Petitioned Warrant articles requiring funds are due sooner as the Budget Committee has to weigh in. All are discussed at the Deliberative Session, where they can be amended. Petitioners are encouraged to attend to explain and support their articles.

Town departments cannot assist with petition drafting due to conflicts of interest.

Petition deadlines:

- General & budget Articles: Second Tuesday in January (RSA 40:13)
- Zoning Articles: Earlier December deadline (per State law)

Where do I go from here?

To see how your petitioned Article gets discussed and possibly amended, see the *Deliberative Session* section. To see the final vote, see the *SB2 Form of Government* section.

Legal authority: RSA 40:13.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR RYE TAX BILL

Residents of Rye contribute to multiple independent entities through annual property taxes: the Rye Town Government, Rye Schools, Rye Water District (about 2/3 of Town), Rockingham County, and — for residents within their boundaries — the Rye Beach Village District and Jenness Beach District. The Town Library and Cemetery Funds are collected by the Town but managed by independent boards.

How the budget becomes your tax bill

The town's fiscal year begins January 1st, but the budget isn't approved until the March town election. Spending from January to March follows the previous year's allocation. Your first tax payment, due in June, uses the tax rate needed to fund the *previous* year's budget. The actual tax rate to fund the budget approved in March is set each fall, before the second tax billing, at a Select Board meeting, then approved by the NH Department of Revenue Administration (DRA). That rate determines the Town's portion, as well as the Precincts' and Water District's portions, of your tax bill. Your December tax bill reflects that new rate.

The operating budget itself is presented to voters at the annual Deliberative Session, as a Warrant Article whose wording is prescribed by RSA 40:13, XI(c). Any registered voter can offer amendments to the proposed budget at that time; amendments are approved or defeated by majority vote of those present. The finalized (possibly amended) budget then goes to the March ballot. That amount cannot exceed the Budget Committee's approved figure by more than 10% (not including bonded debt Articles). If voters defeat the budget at the polls, a default budget takes over — the prior year's appropriations, adjusted for debt service, contracts, and other existing obligations.

Each year, the Select Board, Finance Administrator, and Town Administrator are required to calculate and disclose this default budget total, and how it was derived, before presenting the Budget Committee's proposed operating budget for voter approval.

The School Budget

The School Budget represents the largest share of what Rye taxpayers pay for local government — roughly 60% of total town taxes. The town's tax collection system gathers these funds and allocates them to the School Board.

The largest component is District Wide Costs — expenses shared between Rye Elementary and Rye Junior High, primarily benefits, SAU 50 costs, busing, debt payments, and technology. High school costs are largely outside Rye's control where Portsmouth High School sets the per-student cost, and Rye's annual cost fluctuates with enrollment.

Other taxes on your bill

Every Rye property owner pays Town, School, and County taxes. Residents in the Rye Water District, Jenness Beach Village District, or Rye Beach Village District pay additional district taxes.

Rockingham County: typically around 10% of a resident's tax bill — on an \$8,000 tax bill, roughly \$800 goes to county government. Rye's State Representatives also represent Rye at Rockingham County government. County Commission meetings are open to the public, held every other month.

Rye Water District: not every Rye property is served by Rye Water — some near Portsmouth use Portsmouth water, some near North Hampton use Aquarion. Rye's tax bill includes the Water District's infrastructure costs; Water District properties also receive separate, volume-based water use bills.

Rye Beach Village District: raises its own funds through property taxes, for operations independent of the Select Board. It also receives revenue from the U.S. Postal Service and Rye Sewer Department for use of the Rye Beach Post Office, which the District owns. This District has a representative on the Rye Budget Committee, and the Sewer Commission holds its monthly meetings in the District's building.

Jenness Beach District: taxes are collected by the Town but allocated and spent under Jenness Beach District's own control.

Why your December bill is higher than your June bill

Your June bill assumes the tax rate and your assessed property value are unchanged from the prior year. By December, two things may have changed: the tax rate may have increased, and your assessed value may have changed. If the rate went up, you're paying more overall — and since your June payment used the old (lower) rate, you effectively underpaid in June. That underpayment gets added to your December bill.

Where do I go from here?

For the most recent tax rate breakdown, household cost examples, and department budget figures, see **Rye Civic League 2026 Budget Presentation** in the Appendix. To weigh in on the budget before it's finalized, see The Deliberative Session. To petition a change yourself, see Warrant Articles.

THE DELIBERATIVE SESSION

What does this decide?

The Deliberative Session is where Warrant Articles — including the annual town budget — are presented, discussed, and can be amended before they go to the March ballot. It's the only point in the process where amendments to wording or dollar amounts are possible. This session is where amendments are approved or rejected by majority vote of registered voters in attendance.

This session does not decide the final outcome where Articles as amended here move to a separate vote by official ballot in March, at Rye Elementary School.

What can I bring to it?

Any properly submitted Warrant Article, including proposed amendments to wording or dollar amounts on articles already on the Warrant. If you petitioned an Article onto the Warrant, this is where you explain and defend it.

How do I engage with it?

The Deliberative Session is held between the first and second Saturdays following the last Monday in January, at Rye Junior High School auditorium. The Select Board sets the exact date and a snow date each year within that window. All registered Rye voters can attend and vote on amendments.

Who do I contact?

Select Board office to confirm the date, snow date, and location for the current year.

Who runs the meeting?

The Elected Town Moderator runs the meeting, using the rules established by the Moderator. At the meeting those present can make motions to use different rules.

Legal authority: RSA 40:13, III and VII.

THE RYE MASTER PLAN

What is it?

The Master Plan is Rye's long range planning document, guiding decisions on land use, growth, and community character for the next decade or more. The current version, RYE 2035, was produced through a four-year communitywide planning process aimed at understanding the town as it exists today and gathering resident input on its future.

Why does it matter to me?

The Master Plan influences zoning decisions, conservation priorities, housing policy, and municipal services. This plan is used by boards like the Planning Board and Conservation Commission to justify or evaluate decisions. If a zoning change, development proposal, or town service decision cites "consistency with the Master Plan," then this is the document being referenced.

How does it work?

RYE 2035 set Rye's vision for the next 10+ years as a resilient, sustainable community with strong community connections, diverse housing choices, a stronger local economy, equitable services for residents of all ages, protected natural resources, and preserved semi-rural character. Town boards use this vision to guide zoning amendments, capital planning, and land-use decisions.

Once the Master Plan was approved in 2025, the Planning Board established the Master Plan Implementation Committee (MPIC), that is a sub-committee of the Master Plan. This is the first Rye Master Plan that has an implementation committee as there was not ownership or calls to action from previous Master Plans. MPIC has been meeting semi-annually and at a minimum has one meeting with the public, in addition to communication in the Select Boards' quarterly newsletter.

Where do I go from here?

To see how Master Plan goals translate into specific zoning or land-use decisions, see the *Planning Board* section. To review the full RYE 2035 document, visit:

<https://www.ryenh.gov/614/MASTER-PLAN>



HOW TO RUN FOR ELECTED OFFICE

Rye has a non-partisan official ballot system for local elections and candidates do not run under political party banners.

Verify Voter Registration and Domicile

Candidates must be registered voters and legally domiciled within the Town of Rye before the filing period opens (RSA 669:19).

Monitor the Statutory Filing Window

The candidate filing period opens on the 7th Wednesday before the March town election and closes on the Friday of the following week (RSA 669:19). This 10 day filing window almost always opens in late January and closes in early February. Typically the two weeks prior to the Town Deliberative Meeting.

File the Declaration of Candidacy

Candidates must file an official Declaration of Candidacy form with the Rye Town Clerk during normal business hours at the Town Clerk's office. If filing occurs on the final Friday of the window, the candidate must complete the application in person. School offices are filed at the SAU 50 office in Greenland.

Abide by Campaign Regulations

Candidates must follow political advertising rules under New Hampshire law. Political signs cannot be affixed to utility poles or highway signs and must be removed by the second Friday following the election. Candidates wishing to hold campaign signs at the transfer station must sign up at the town hall.

REVISED STATUTES ANNOTATED (RSAs)

RSA stands for Revised Statutes Annotated, the codified laws of New Hampshire. Citations like "RSA 41:8" throughout this handbook refer to specific statutes, searchable in full at gencourt.state.nh.us/rsa



ELECTED BODIES

These are the positions Rye voters fill directly, by ballot on Election Day. Each holder is accountable to the town through re-election rather than appointment.

In this section:

- Select Board
- Library Board of Trustees
- School Board
- Town Moderator
- Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA)
- Town Clerk/Tax Collector
- Town Treasurer
- Budget Committee
- Supervisors of the Checklist
- Cemeteries and Cemetery Trustees
- Trustees of the Trust Funds
- Sewer Commission
- Conservation Commission (starting March 2027)
- Rockingham County Commissioner

SELECT BOARD

What does the Select Board decide?

The Select Board is Rye's executive governing body, managing the town's day to day "prudential affairs".¹ The board carries out decisions made at Town Meeting and has authority to spend money, sign deeds, appoint new officials, compose legal ordinances and policies and enter into contractual agreements. The board has five elected members serving staggered three-year terms.² All business, except in those situations specifically exempted by statute, must be conducted in a public session with duly posted notice.³

The Select Board does not oversee other independently elected bodies, including the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment.⁴

What can I bring to it?

Anything within the jurisdiction of the Select Board - any concerns about town operations, road conditions, municipal staff, contracts, town policies, or budget implementation. If your issue falls under a different board or elected official, the Select Board will direct you to the right place.

¹ RSA 41:8

² RSA 41:8-b

³ RSA 91-A, ("Right to Know")

⁴ RSA 41:9VI (Select Board powers and limitations). The Board's authority comes from the State Legislature where it can only exercise powers specifically granted by statute, ordinance, or bylaw. Rye has no "Home Rule," meaning the Board cannot act outside those granted powers., and cannot interfere with functions delegated by statute to other elected officials. The Board can obtain information from other elected officials, hire personnel and set salaries (subject to Town Meeting appropriation), approve purchasing, and set rules for safeguarding municipal property and financial assets

How do I engage with it?

Meetings are held the second and fourth Monday of each month at 6:30 PM at Rye Town Hall, open to the public.

Speaking during the public comment period lets you raise an issue, but doesn't guarantee discussion or a response from the Board.

If you want the Board to discuss an issue or a proposed solution, request to be placed on the agenda in advance by writing to the Select Board. Agenda items give the Board a chance to review your letter and any background information ahead of time so a real discussion can happen.

To speak or request agenda placement, contact the Executive Assistant at least five days before the meeting at (603) 964-5523. The Select Board has historically supported Public Comment, but each Board can modify its policy for Public Comments.

Agendas, minutes, recorded sessions and contact information are posted on the town website at the QR code below.

For details on running for this seat, see the *Running for Elected Office* section.



LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Rye Public Library, located at 581 Washington Road in Rye Town Center, is the cultural center for the Town.

There are five Library Trustees that make up the governing board of the Rye Public Library. Each trustee is elected for a three-year term. The Library Board of Trustees typically meet monthly, and the meetings are open to the public.

The Board of Trustees is the policy-making unit, responsible for the management of the library, for representing the library to the community, and for acting as representatives of the community to the library. The Trustees create the bylaws, rules and regulations by which they conduct business and govern the library. They are responsible for creating and making public the library's annual operating budget. The Trustees are also responsible for the expenditure of any funds raised on behalf of the library. The library receives donations and grants from the citizenry, from the Friends of the Rye Public Library, and from foundations to support its educational and cultural offerings to the Town of Rye. As of 2026, the library has a Director and Assistant Director.



SCHOOL BOARD

What does the School Board decide?

The five elected School Board members are responsible for the annual School Budget and for the framework within which the principals manage the Junior High School and the Elementary School. Day to day decisions within each school are the responsibility of the principal.

Rye, along with Greenland, New Castle and Newington make up SAU 50. The SAU provides much of the administration work for the schools, including a Superintendent who manages all SAU 50 staff, an Assistant Superintendent, a four person finance team, a Facilities Director, a Technology Director, a Special Education Director, and others.

How do I engage with it?

Meetings are held monthly during the school year on the third Wednesday of each month at 5:30 PM at Rye Junior High. The meetings are open to the public. For more information, please check the website:

<https://rjh.sau50.org/en-US>

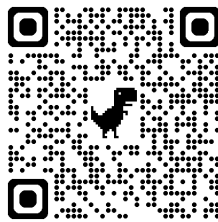
<https://res.sau50.org/en-US>

TOWN MODERATOR

Rye's Town Moderator is elected by town vote to a two-year term. As specified by RSA 40:4, the moderator presides over our Deliberative Session each February; sets the rules of the meeting within the law (subject to being over-ruled by the Deliberative Session of those assembled); controls the flow and subject of discussion; maintains an orderly meeting; and announces the results of each vote.

The Town Moderator also oversees the town vote each March, as well as all elections and primaries for local, state and national offices that are held in Rye. At the town vote, the Moderator opens and closes the polls and regulates the business that occurs there between the opening and closing to ensure the integrity of the voting process.

With the Town Moderator's help, the Town Clerk sets up the polling place at the request of the Select Board. The Moderator ensures that the election process complies with state and federal statutes; keeps the polling place free from electioneering influence; works with the Supervisors of the Checklist to review challenges to voters; processes absentee ballots; oversees the counting of the ballots; and reports the results of the vote after the counting is complete.



PLANNING BOARD

In 1952, the voters of Rye granted the Planning Board the authority to regulate the subdivision of land, and in 1980 the voters granted the Planning Board the authority to regulate site plans for non-residential and multi-family residential development (see also Zoning Board of Adjustment).

The Planning Board is responsible for updating and regulating the Land Use Regulations, Zoning Ordinance, Floodplain Ordinance and Town's Master Plan. Information and services available at the Planning Department include:

- Assistance with completing Planning Board applications.
- Application review for conformance with Site Plan/Subdivision regulations.
- Recommendations for approval or denial of applications for Site Plan Review, Subdivision of Land and Special Permits (wetland impact).
- Assistance to the public in understanding the town's zoning ordinances with respect to Site Plan and/or Subdivision applications.
- Information on the Rye Master Plan.
- Planning Board meeting agenda minutes.

The Planning Board meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:00 PM. The deadline for submissions is the 2nd Friday of each month. To have a hearing before the Planning Board, one must apply for the hearing at least 21 business days prior to the meeting. The Technical Review Committee meets two weeks before the Planning Board to review the application for completeness. All permit applications must be complete and must be submitted prior to the meeting. Visit or call the Planning Department to find out which permit applications are required for your project and for assistance in completing them.

Full Planning Board regulations: Zoning Ordinance (Chapter 190) and Land Development Regulations (Chapter 202), available at ecode360.com/RY3900

Planning Board Administrator

The Planning and Zoning Administrator works closely with the Planning Board, its subcommittees and the Zoning Board of Adjustment. The Planning and Zoning Administrator serves as the liaison between the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Adjustment, Attorneys, Developers, Landowners and the public, helping anyone interested in understanding the regulations for development and assisting all interested parties to comprehend the potential impact of proposed projects.

The Planning and Zoning Administrator collaborates with other town Departments, and Commissions, such as the Building Department, Fire Department, Public Works Department, Rye Water Department, Police Department and the Conservation Commission to ensure that applications brought to the Planning Board are reviewed by all departments before public hearing in order to achieve the best results for the Town of Rye.

Planning Board Subcommittees

Rules and Regulations: responsible for changes to the Town Zoning Ordinances or Land Use Regulations.

Long Range Planning: previously updated the Master Plan and now handled by the Master Plan Steering Committee.

The Planning and Zoning Administrator may be reached at (603) 379-8081 and the office is on the second floor of Town Hall. Visit the Planning Board page on the Rye website for schedules, deadlines, fee information, forms, regulations and downloads.

<https://www.ryenh.gov/633/Planning-Board>

ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT [ZBA]

The Rye Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) is an elected body, supported by the Planning Zoning Administration and the Land Use Administrator. Town Counsel frequently supports the Board.

The Planning Board administers the Land Use Regulations where the Zoning Board can grant variances, waivers, and exceptions from those regulations (RSA 674:33). Authorized under RSA 674:33, the Board hears appeals, grants variances and special exceptions, and issues equitable waivers of dimensional requirements. It may affirm, reverse, or modify appealed decisions, guided by the Rye Zoning Ordinance and map. The ZBA ensures zoning is applied fairly and consistently, using both statutory and case law for interpretation.

RSA 674:16 specifies that the “zoning ordinance shall be designed to regulate and restrict:

- (a) The height, number of stories and size of buildings and other structures
- (b) Lot sizes, the percentage of a lot that may be occupied, and the size of yards, courts and other open spaces
- (c) The density of population in the municipality
- (d) The location and use of buildings, structures and land used for business, industrial, residential, or other purposes.”

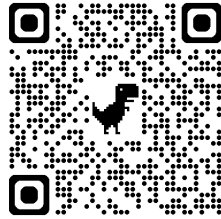
Applications the Zoning Board can hear include: Variance, Special Exception, Administrative Appeal, Waiver of Building Code and Equitable Waiver. An applicant seeking a Variance must first obtain a building permit denial from the Building Inspector.

The ZBA consists of five members, each to serving staggered three-year terms along with up to five alternates. An alternate may attend meetings and ask questions but does not vote unless seated to replace an absent member.

The Zoning Board meets at 7:00 p.m. on the 1st Wednesday of each month at the Rye Town Hall.

For application details and requirements, go to the Zoning Board page on the Rye website and download Instructions to Applicants from the Forms pull-down menu. The deadline for submittal of applications to be discussed by the Board is the 2nd Friday of each month. Specific deadlines are posted on the website. To contact the Rye Zoning Board: Kim Reed, Planning and Zoning Administrator at (603) 379-8081 or kreed@town.rye.nh.us

<https://www.ryenh.gov/767/Zoning-Board-of-Adjustment>



TYPES of ZBA APPLICATIONS

VARIANCE: A variance is an authorization, which may be granted under special circumstances, to use your property in a way that is not permitted under the strict terms of the Rye Zoning Ordinance. For a variance to be legally granted, you, the Petitioner, must show that your proposed use meets all five of the following criteria:

1. Granting the variance would not be contrary to the public interest.
2. Special conditions exist such that literal enforcement of the ordinance results in unnecessary hardship,
3. The variance would be consistent with the spirit of the ordinance. Granting the variance would do substantial justice.
4. No diminution in the value of surrounding properties would be suffered.

SPECIAL EXCEPTION: A special exception is an authorization, which may be granted under special circumstances, for a specific use that is a permitted use under the Zoning Ordinance so long as the use complies with specific conditions as set forth in the Ordinance.

EQUITABLE WAIVER OF DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENT: As provided for under N.H. RSA 674:33-a (and Section 1.4.2.1 of the Zoning Ordinance)

When a lot or other division of land, or structure thereupon, is discovered to be in violation of a physical layout or dimensional requirement imposed by a zoning ordinance enacted pursuant to RSA 674:16, the Zoning Board of Adjustment shall, upon application by and with the burden of proof on the property owner, grant an equitable waiver from the requirement, if and only if the Board makes specific findings.

APPEAL FROM AN ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION: Appeals to the Board of Adjustment concerning any matter within the Board's powers as set forth in RSA 674:33 and RSA 676:5 may be taken by any person aggrieved, or by any officer, department, board, or bureau of the municipality affected, a) from a decision of an administrative official, or b) from a Planning Board decision or determination, in the exercise of subdivision or site plan review, which is based upon the terms of:

The zoning ordinance, or upon any construction, interpretation, or application of the zoning ordinance, which would be appealable to the Board of Adjustment if it had been made by an administrative officer.

APPEAL OF BUILDING CODE DECISION: In Rye, the Zoning Board of Adjustment acts as the Building Code Board of Appeals. The Board has the power, upon an appeal filed with it by any person aggrieved by a decision of the building inspector dealing with the building code, to vary the application of any provision of the building code to any particular case when, in its opinion, the enforcement of the building code would do manifest injustice and would be contrary to the spirit and purpose of the building code and the public interest.

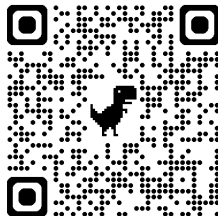
TOWN CLERK/TAX COLLECTOR

The Town Clerk has been responsible for maintaining town records since Rye was incorporated in 1729. Visit the Town Clerk/Tax Collector's office to:

- Register (renew) a motor vehicle or boat
- Obtain a marriage license
- Obtain copies of vital records (birth, marriage, divorce and death certificates)
- License your dog; All dogs must be licensed by April 30 each year
- Obtain a New Hampshire State Wetlands/Dredge and Fill Permit Application
- Register to vote
- Apply for/obtain an absentee ballot

The Town Clerk/Tax Collector is responsible for filing tax liens and deeds, and for administering all federal, state, and local elections. Duties include voter registration, issuing absentee ballots, preparing official minutes, printing ballots, and recording and certifying election results. Rye collects property taxes from all property owners twice each year. The taxes are due around July 1st and December 1st, or 30 days from the mailing of the tax notices. Taxes may be paid in person at the Town Clerk/Tax Collector's Office, by mail, or on-line on the Town of Rye website.

The Town Clerk/Tax Collector's office is located at the Town Hall Annex at 500 Washington Road.

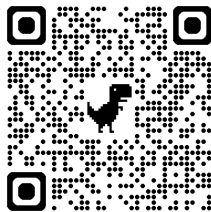


TOWN TREASURER

The Rye Town Treasurer is an elected official and serves a three-year term. The Treasurer is responsible for the financial assets of the town, except those under the jurisdiction of the Trustees of the Trust Funds and those special funds that are managed by other Town officers as prescribed by law. The Treasurer signs all Town payroll and Accounts Payable checks; has the authority (along with the Select Board) to borrow on behalf of the Town; maintains all of the Town's bank accounts; and reconciles the Town's bank statements. The Treasurer also holds the Town's escrow and other cash accounts.

The Treasurer may appoint an Assistant Treasurer to serve in their absence. As of the 2025 Town Officials listing, Lindsay Murphy serves as Deputy Treasurer.

The Finance Department, Tax Collector, and Town Clerk provide the Treasurer with cash receipts reports on a weekly basis. The Treasurer provides monthly reports regarding the Town's financial assets to the Finance Director.



BUDGET COMMITTEE

The Rye Budget Committee is responsible for establishing each year's operating budget for the Town, the Water District and the two Precincts: Jenness Beach and Rye Beach. The Rye Library and Cemetery funds are collected by the town but are managed by independent boards of trustees.

The Budget Committee consists of six members-at-large, each of whom is elected to a three-year term. The terms are staggered so that not all are up for re-election the same year. There are also five appointed members, representing the Select Board, the School Board, the Jenness Beach District, the Rye Water District and the Rye Beach District. Residents may contact the Chairman of the Budget Committee or any of the individual members with questions or comments. The Rye Budget Committee's duties are outlined in RSA 32:5.

The Budget Committee meets according to the annual calendar established by the Committee at the beginning of each annual budgeting cycle. The dates, times and locations of the work sessions and Public Hearings are posted. Each meeting agenda is posted at least a week in advance.

The Town budget process begins with meetings between the department heads and the Town Administrator to develop the departmental budgets. The Town Administrator then approves or adjusts those budgets and submits them to the Select Board. The members of the Select Board approve or revise the departmental budgets and send the statement of proposed expenditures and revenues for the following year to the Budget Committee. The Budget Committee holds work sessions with the Town Administrator and Department Heads to review the departmental budgets and anticipated revenues for the following year. The Budget Committee can support or modify the departmental budgetary recommendations. The same procedure is followed for the Rye School District, with similar work sessions occurring for the Rye Beach District, the Jenness Beach District and Rye Water District budget requests.

SUPERVISORS OF THE CHECKLIST

The Supervisors of the Checklist are responsible for maintaining the list of registered voters in Rye (the checklist). There are three Supervisors of the Checklist, each of whom is elected by town vote to a six-year term. New residents of Rye or residents who have attained legal voting age can register to vote at the Town Clerk's office in the Town Hall. It is the Supervisors of the Checklist who approve each addition to the list of registered voters. For more information, contact the Supervisors of the Checklist at the Town Clerk's office (603) 964-8562.

The Supervisors of the Checklist meet four times annually to review and approve or reject new voter applications. The reasons for possible rejection might be because someone is not a Rye resident, is too young, or is not a US citizen. The Supervisors' meetings are noticed and are open to the public. The Supervisors are required by law to hold a meeting ten days prior to each election. Residents who wish to register to vote, and registered voters who wish to change their affiliation from "Undeclared" to a political party should check with the Supervisors of the Checklist or the Town Clerk. The Supervisors of the Checklist are present at each year's Town Deliberative Session, School Board Deliberative Session, and at the polling place on every Election Day.

Residents may register to vote at the Deliberative Session or on Election Day, as long as they have the required identification and proof of residency. While anybody may attend the Deliberative Session, only registered voters may speak or vote at that meeting.

CEMETERIES AND CEMETERY TRUSTEES

There is one cemetery in active use in Rye – the Central Cemetery, located on Central Road next to Town Hall. The governing board of the Central Cemetery is composed of three elected trustees who serve three-year staggered terms. The Trustees meet quarterly and the meetings are open to the public.

There are over sixty small family graveyards in Town that are reminders of our early history and are scattered throughout Rye. Some of the graveyards which are more accessible than others include:

1. The Wedgewood Family Cemetery located on the north side of Lang Road behind the Junior High School
2. The Caswell Cemetery, located on Star Island at the Isles of Shoals
3. The Old Odiorne Point Cemetery on Route One A in Rye, located between the two entrances to Odiorne Park. It is the oldest cemetery in New Hampshire and is the site of the monument to David Thomson, New Hampshire's first European settler in 1623.
4. The Foss Family Cemetery, located on Washington Road
5. The Berry Family Cemetery, located on Breakfast Hill
6. The South Road Cemetery
7. The Congregational Cemetery
8. The Locke Family Cemeteries, located on Harbor Road and Locke Road Extension

The Rye Historical Society maintains an inventory of these family plots with photographs and other historical information available to the public. The Rye Heritage Commission has an Adopt a Graveyard Program to foster preservation of these sites for future generations. Visit this link for more information: <https://www.ryenh.gov/575/Heritage-Commission>

TRUSTEES OF THE TRUST FUNDS

The responsibilities of the Trustees of the Rye Trust Funds are to:

- safeguard the money in the trust funds
- comply with the provisions of the documents establishing trusts
- approve an investment policy for the trust funds annually
- invest the funds according to the investment policy
- pay out the income and the principal according to the trust documents
- prepare and submit annual reports to the Town and to the State of NH

The Trustees of the Trust Funds retain custody of all trust funds held by the Town. The funds are invested in deposits in federally or state-chartered banks or associations authorized as to banking institutions in New Hampshire, in deposits in New Hampshire credit unions, in United States government bonds, notes or other obligations, or in state, county, town, city, school district, water and sewer district bonds and the notes of towns or cities in New Hampshire. They may also invest in stocks and bonds which are legal for investment by any bank or association chartered by New Hampshire to engage in a banking business. They may also invest in participation units in the public deposit investment pool established pursuant to RSA 383:22.

The Trustees of the Rye Trust Funds do retain investments of the town's assets received from donors until maturity based upon a formal investment policy for all investments made by them for any trust funds held in their custody. The investment policy is reviewed and confirmed at least annually. The investment policy of the Rye Trustees of the Trust Funds, pursuant to RSA 31:25, addresses the issues of safety, income generation, and cash flow/liquidity.

The Trustees are also responsible for capital reserve funds as governed by RSA 35-9, which reads, "The moneys in each such fund shall be kept in a separate account and not intermingled with other funds of said municipality." The monies in the capital reserve funds are used exclusively for the projects defined by each fund's name. All of these accounts are detailed in the Annual Report of the Town published by the Select Board in March of each year

and available at Town Hall and available on the town website at

<https://www.ryenh.gov/437/Annual-Town-Reports>

There are three Trustees of the Rye Trust Funds. Each trustee is elected to a three-year term. The terms are staggered so that no more than one Trustee is up for re-election in any one year. The Trustees of the Trust Funds meet at least quarterly and more often as necessary. Meeting notices are posted at the Town Hall and on the Town Website. Starting in 2025 the Select Board required the Trustees to fund its own Accounting manager.

The meetings are open to the public. To see agendas and meeting minutes visit:

<https://www.ryenh.gov/766/Trustee-of-the-Trust-Funds>

SEWER COMMISSION

The Town of Rye Sewer Commission is responsible for the administration, billing, operation, and maintenance of the Rye Sewer District. The Sewer Commission also administers the billing and operation of Adams Mobile Home Park's connection to the City of Portsmouth sewer system. Sewer customers are billed quarterly for operation, maintenance, and replacement cost. The charge is based on per cubic feet of H2O Consumption. The list of sewer charges and fees is available at the Sewer Commission Office.

The City of Portsmouth sewer system also extends to the Atlantic Grill Restaurant, located at Foyes Corner. The State of New Hampshire originally mandated Sewer in Rye, to protect the shoreline. The Rye collection system was constructed in the early 1990's and has 6.9 miles of gravity sewer and 3.5 miles of force main. At the end of 2023, Rye had 555 parcels connected to the system.

The Sewer Commission has a process for abating customers for accessory or incidental water usage that does not enter the public sewer system. A permit is required, and customers are responsible for the installation and expense of a secondary meter. The meter is read annually, and the customer is abated for the consumption. Any person, contractor or plumber who will be installing sewer pipes and making sewer connections in Rye must be licensed by the Town of Rye Sewer Commission. The entry of surface water into the sewer system from downspouts and sump pumps is forbidden.

The Sewer Commission is comprised of three elected members whose terms are staggered. The Commission meets monthly to conduct business. Meetings are typically held the second Tuesday of each month at 8:00 a.m. in the Sewer Commission Office and the public is encouraged to attend.

The Sewer Commission Office is located on the second floor of the Rye Beach Village District Building above the Rye Beach Post Office at 830 Central Road, Rye Beach, NH. For more information contact the Rye Sewer Commission at (603) 964-6815 and visit: <https://www.ryenh.gov/481/Sewer-Department>



CONSERVATION COMMISSION

[Elected in 2027]

Efforts to reclaim and protect Rye's salt marshes date back to the 1920s and continue today with projects like the Goss Farm. The Rye Conservation Commission safeguards wetlands, buffers, and natural resources for groundwater protection, stormwater control, pollution filtering, recreation, and wildlife habitat.

The Conservation Commission has seven members and two alternates, all Rye residents, who are appointed by the Select Board. The Conservation Commission advises the Planning and Zoning Boards on Town Special Permits for work in wetlands or within 100 feet of them, reviews state DES Wetlands Bureau applications, and helps enforce the NH Shoreland Protection Act (covering projects within 250 feet of coastal waters, large ponds, and major rivers). New Hampshire State Wetlands Bureau Permit applications can be obtained at the Town Clerk's office. Rye Special Permit applications can be obtained at the Planning Board office.

The Commission has secured hundreds of acres for water protection, It maintains public trails, and oversees Goss Farm, which is used for education, food donation, and invasive species management. Meetings are open to the public, and residents may provide comments on applications. To be placed on the agenda, applications must be submitted at least one week in advance. <https://www.ryenh.gov/539/Conservation-Commission>



ROCKINGHAM COUNTY COMMISSIONER

What are they?

Rye is located in District 1 of the Rockingham County Board of Commissioners. Commissioners are elected by district, and Rye residents vote specifically for the District 1 seat. The Board of County Commissioners serves as the executive branch of county government, managing day-to-day operations, property, and personnel. The board provides fiscal oversight for all county departments, including county-run nursing homes, the department of corrections, and the registry of deeds.

Who currently serves:

Kate Coyle (District 1)

Who do I contact?

Rockingham County Commissioners' Office

Address: 94 North Road, Brentwood, NH 03833

Phone: (603) 679-9350

<https://rockinghamcountynh.org/departments/board-of-commissioners/>

APPOINTED BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

These bodies are filled by Select Board appointment rather than election. If you're interested in serving, you apply and the Select Board reviews applicants and makes the appointment.

In this section:

- Rye Process for Appointment to a Voluntary Committee, Commission or Board
- Heritage Commission
- Historic District Commission
- Energy Committee
- Mosquito Control Commission
- Capital Improvement Program Committee (CIP)
- Beach Committee
- Recycling Education Committee
- Parsons's Creek Advisory Committee
- Representative to Rockingham Planning Commission

RYE PROCESS FOR APPOINTMENT TO A VOLUNTARY COMMITTEE, COMMISSION OR BOARD

1. The Selectboard posts the existence of a new opening or the expiration of an existing appointment for 30 days before applicants are considered.
2. If you are interested in a new appointment, attend one or more meetings of the Committee, Commission or Board that you wish to serve. for which you are interested in becoming a member.
3. Request the Committee, Commission or Board vote on whether to recommend the appointment of a new applicant to the Select Board.
4. Submit a letter to the Select board, including a resume and a statement of interest outlining the reasons for applying, and formally request appointment.
5. Attend the meeting of the Select Board scheduled to consider your appointment or reappointment and be prepared to speak to your interest in the position applied for.
6. If the Select Board votes to approve your appointment or reappointment, you will need to be sworn in by the Town Clerk before you can officially join the next meeting of the committee, commission or board.

Please note appointments for Planning Board and Zoning Board alternates and other representatives go through the Planning Administrator.

Full policy:

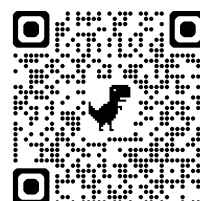
<https://www.ryenh.gov/DocumentCenter/View/545/BoardsCommissionsCommittees-Policy>

Forms:

<https://www.ryenh.gov/DocumentCenter/View/546/Statement-of-Interest-Form>

General information:

<https://www.ryenh.gov/460/Volunteer-Opportunities>



HERITAGE COMMISSION

The Rye Heritage Commission, established under RSA 673, works to recognize, protect, and promote Rye's historic, cultural, and community resources. It advises local boards and supports the Planning Board's Master Plan. The Commission advises on cultural resource matters, including surveying, researching, publishing findings, and helping establish heritage districts per RSA 675:6.

The Heritage Commission has documented historic homes and grave markers, and launched a Heritage Marker Program for well-preserved buildings over 50 years old. To help preserve Rye's historic landmarks, demolitions for structures over 65 years old and 500 square feet require a permit from the Demolition Review Committee. The Heritage Commission also sponsors the Graveyard Adoption Program, Rye Advocates, and manages the Heritage Fund for preservation efforts. The Heritage Fund accepts donations to help acquire and preserve historic properties in Rye

Members are appointed by the Select Board, and meetings are open to the public. More information is available at Rye Heritage Commission's website:

<https://www.ryenh.gov/575/Heritage-Commission>



HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

The Rye Historic District is the area of town from the west end of Grange Park to the intersection of Central and Washington Roads. The Historic District also includes the Brackett Road Massacre Site, the historic Cable House and the Isles of Shoals islands, which fall within the State of New Hampshire (White Island, Star Island, Seavey Island and Lunging Island). The District is comprised of pre-revolutionary, federal and Victorian residential, commercial and municipal buildings, which date structures from 1724.

The purpose of the Rye Historic District as described in the Rye, New Hampshire Zoning Ordinances is:

1. to preserve the unique collections of historically, architecturally and culturally significant buildings and structures which characterize the Town of Rye.
2. to encourage their maintenance and restoration, and
3. to ensure that new construction, alterations, and uses of buildings within the District are visually harmonious with neighboring properties, so that the character of the District is preserved and will:
 - a. reflect the cultural, social, economic, political, and architectural history of the Town of Rye.
 - b. conserve and maintain property values in such District,
 - c. foster civic beauty,
 - d. strengthen the local economy, and
 - e. generally provide an opportunity to benefit the education, pleasure and welfare of all the citizens of the municipality.

The Rye Historic District Commission has seven members appointed by the Select Board for staggered three-year terms. The Commission also may have five alternate members appointed for staggered three-year terms.

The Historic District Commission is a regulatory land-use commission which votes on exterior changes to the buildings, fencing, walls and signage within the defined District. Citizens residing within the District wishing to construct, alter, repair, move, demolish or change the exterior of a structure, must obtain a Certificate of Approval from the Historic District Commission before obtaining any building permits. An exception exists for a repair which replaces like materials which only requires notification be given to the Commission. Applications for a Certificate of Approval may be obtained from the Office of the Building Inspector located at Town Hall.

The Commission also applies for grants to engage professionals to assist with inventories of historic properties, helping them qualify for listing on the State and Federal Historic Registries. The Town of Rye has membership in the Certified Local Government Program (CLG), which provides access to Federal funds that can serve as seed money for larger grants, as well as technical assistance for updating preservation ordinances and other preservation initiatives. Through this program, Rye received a grant to prepare the nomination of the Rye Town Hall to the National Register of Historic Places, and in 2021 the Town Hall was officially accepted on to the National Register.

ENERGY COMMITTEE

The Rye Energy Committee was formed in 2007, after voters approved a Warrant Article at Town Meeting that year calling for the Town to appoint a voluntary committee to recommend local steps to save energy and reduce emissions. The goals of the Committee are to promote energy conservation and efficiency and to explore ways to reduce carbon emissions among the town's residents, businesses, and in municipal affairs.

The Rye Energy Committee oversees Rye Community Power (RCP). RCP as a part of the Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire (CPCNH), allows the Town buys electricity on behalf of its residents. CPCNH currently has 35 member communities that allows it to offer lower electric rates and more renewable options than Eversource.

<https://www.ryenh.gov/569/Community-Power>

The Committee is composed of seven members. In addition, advisory members—such as scientists, educators, and representatives of business or civic organizations—may be invited to participate on an as-needed basis. The Energy Committee holds meetings that are open to the public, and community members are encouraged to provide input.

MOSQUITO CONTROL COMMISSION

The Town of Rye empowers the Rye Mosquito Control Commission (RMCC) under the provisions of RSA 437-A of the New Hampshire State laws. The three-member commission is appointed by the Rye Select Board. Each member has a term of three years. The RMCC holds monthly meetings and welcomes the public to attend and participate.

The RMCC provides oversight and works closely with an independent contractor to provide mosquito control for the Town of Rye. Controlling mosquito populations and the potential occurrence of Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) and West Nile Virus (WNV) are the top priorities of the RMCC. RMCC makes every effort to utilize safe, environmentally sound practices. The elimination of routine town-wide spraying allows the contractor to increase their efforts on surveying and treating (larviciding) the salt marshes and fresh water habitats. The material usually used is *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* (Bti), a natural bacterium that does not harm people, pets, birds, fish or plants.

The current contractor, Dragon Mosquito Control, Inc. maintains and places at least 150 town-owned greenhead fly traps in the marshes to help reduce greenhead flies especially at the Town's beaches. The traps are typically set out in June and removed from field service in September and stored at the Town owned Goss Farm.

If a property owner wishes to be included on the "No-Spray List" for any street spraying or does not want Dragon Mosquito Control on their property, contact Dragon in writing at: Dragon Mosquito Control Inc., PO Box 46, Stratham, NH 03885, call the Dragon staff at (603)734-4144 or visit their website www.dragonmosquito.com.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM COMMITTEE [CIP]

The Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Committee is authorized under RSA 674:5-6 for towns, such as Rye, that have adopted a Master Plan. The Committee is appointed by the Select Board and typically meets twice a month. All meetings are open to the public.

The purpose of the Capital Improvements Program is to assist the Select Board and the budget committee in their consideration and preparation of the annual budget. The CIP Committee, based on input from the town's departments and school board, classifies projects based on urgency, need, and adherence to the Master Plan.

The CIP priority guidelines are as follows:

Priority 1: To secure life and property.

Priority 2: To maintain the present standard of living.

Priority 3: To improve the community in accordance with the Master Plan.

The Committee is charged with the preparation and recommendation of a long-range program (six years or more) of municipal capital improvements. Capital is taken to mean items valued at \$15,000.00 or more and not of a maintenance nature. The comprehensive CIP plan is published on the Rye Website:

<https://www.ryenh.gov/532/Capital-Improvements-Program-Committee>



BEACH COMMITTEE

What does the Beach Committee decide?

The Beach Committee is a Standing Committee of the Select Board, established in 2020 following a 2019 vote (Article 34). It makes recommendations to the Select Board on beach safety, environmental concerns, and public access. The committee doesn't have independent decision making authority but, its recommendations inform Select Board decisions on beach management.

Note that Lifeguard supervision falls under the Fire Chief instead of the Beach Committee.

RECYCLING EDUCATION COMMITTEE

What does it do?

The Recycling Education Committee is a sub-committee of the Rye Energy Committee, established by the Select Board to educate residents on recycling and maximize use of the Transfer Station's source separated recycling program. The committee researches ways to increase participation and provides educational materials, seminars, and public talks. The Recycling Education Committee does not set town recycling policy.

How do I engage with it?

Meetings the third Tuesday of the month at 6:30pm at the library and all residents are welcome to come and share their ideas and/or questions. Learn more about the committee on the town website:

<https://www.ryenh.gov/675/Recycling-Education-Committee>

PARSON'S CREEK ADVISORY COMMITTEE

What does this committee decide?

The Parsons Creek Advisory Committee oversees the town's efforts to address impaired water quality in Parsons Creek, which affects Wallis Sands Beach. The Committee tracks septic system pump-out compliance in the watershed, works with town departments on enforcement and ordinance updates, and coordinates outreach and funding research for homeowners in the watershed. The committee makes recommendations the Select Board and doesn't have independent regulatory authority.

How do I engage with it?

Meets the second Wednesday of each month, 8:30 AM, at Rye Town Hall, with a Zoom option. Meetings are public.

View the committee's agendas and meeting minutes on the town website:

<https://www.ryenh.gov/AgendaCenter/Parsons-Creek-Advisory-Committee-24/?>

REPRESENTATIVE TO ROCKINGHAM PLANNING COMMISSION

What do they do?

The Rockingham Planning Commission (RPC) is a regional organization that coordinates planning across 27 southeastern New Hampshire towns and cities, including Rye. It provides member towns with technical planning assistance, GIS mapping and data, guidance on land use and development review, and help navigating grants. The RPC offers support most towns couldn't afford to staff on their own.

Rye's representative sits on the Commission itself, alongside one appointed representative from each member town. In that role, the representative helps set RPC's policy, approves its budget, and decides the direction of its work and then reports back, keeping Rye informed of RPC activity and bringing Rye's own priorities and concerns to the Commission's table.

How is this position filled?

Appointed by Select Board. Recommended by the Planning Board.

TOWN DEPARTMENTS AND SERVICES

These are the departments that handle Rye's day-to-day operations. Some are run by elected officials and others are staffed by administrators hired by the Select Board.

In this section:

- Town Administrator
- Assessing Department
- Building Department
- Finance Department
- Fire Department
- Police Department
- Public Works Department
- Recreation Department and Commission
- Welfare Department
- Animal Control
- Rye Beaches
- Rye Schools

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

The Rye Town Administrator is hired by the Select Board. The Town Administrator functions as the administrative officer of all Town departments, on behalf of the Select Board. The Town Administrator is responsible for the general supervision of the business affairs of the Town, as well as the expenditure of funds appropriated for town purposes. The Town Administrator is responsible for reporting to the Select Board regarding receipts and disbursements under the Town Administrator's control and coordinates the preparation of the annual operating budget with the Select Board and the Budget Committee. The Town Administrator works with the heads of Town departments to set the preliminary budget for the Town each year. The proposed budget then goes to the Select Board for review and then on to the Budget Committee for approval.

The Town Administrator is also responsible for supervising government operations and implementing the policies established by the Select Board. The Town Administrator may approve vouchers for obligations incurred by any department under the Town Administrator's supervision. The Town Administrator will represent the Select Board when working with the various Town boards, commissions, and committees, as well as the public and media. The Town Administrator also coordinates legal matters with the Town Counsel.

ASSESSING DEPARTMENT

The Assessor's primary responsibility is to estimate the fair market value of Rye property at least once in every five years. It re-measures 20% - 25% of the town every year. The State of New Hampshire Department of Revenue [DRA] calls this a Cyclical Review. It eliminates the need to do a full revaluation every 5 years. The assessor also works to maintain assessment equity between neighborhoods during the interim years so that taxpayers contribute a fair share of support for community services.

Rye has had an in-house Assessor in the past but the Town currently contracts this function to Municipal Resources, Inc.(MRI).

The Assessing Department oversees town tax exemptions and credits, and the following are tax exemptions available to Rye residents:

- The ELDERLY EXEMPTION RSA 72:33
- A BLIND EXEMPTION RSA 72:37
- A VETERAN'S CREDIT RSA 72:28
- OPEN SPACE. RSA 79-A or RSA 79- B
- A DISCRETIONARY PRESERVATION EASEMENT RSA 79-
- A SOLAR ENERGY HEATING AND COOLING EXEMPTION RSA 72

The assessed values for properties in Rye may be found at [GIS](#) [Geographical Information System] on the town website. Municipal Resources, Inc. is the Contract Assessor for the Town of Rye. The Assessing Department is located at the Town Hall Annex.

<https://www.ryenh.gov/197/Assessing-Department>

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

The Building Department is the first point of contact for any land development or structural changes in the Town of Rye. The department is overseen by the Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer. Building Department permits are required for any construction, including repairs, renovations, additions, remodeling, demolition, siding, roofing, fences, sheds, pools, garages, electrical work, plumbing work, septic, HVAC, mechanical work, or hot water heaters. In addition, a Driveway Permit must be obtained before a permit for a new dwelling can be issued. All development within the Special Flood Hazard Area requires a Flood Plain Development Permit that is issued by the Building Department.

The Department reviews all applications and issues permits for both residential and commercial development, plus Sign, Mechanical, Plumbing, Electrical, and Demolition Permits, as well as Certificates of Occupancy.

Additional permits may be required by other departments, such as the Historic District Commission whose Guidelines are published on the town website. Heating systems, fireplaces and any gas piping also require additional permits from the Fire Department. Permits for driveways are obtained from the Director of Public Works.

Demolition permits must also be submitted to the Demolition Committee which documents all buildings in Rye that are being destroyed if larger than 500 square feet and older than sixty-five years. If the work is to be done in the Wetlands Conservation District, the Conservation Commission must also sign the Demolition Permit.

The Building Department is charged with enforcement of the State Building Code. It is also charged with enforcement of the Town of Rye's Zoning ordinances and Planning Board decisions. Under the Rye Zoning Ordinance, the Building Inspector, in addition to the Select Board, has the authority to initiate enforcement actions if there is a violation of the Ordinance.

If your request is in violation of any of the current Zoning and Land Use Ordinances, you will need to request a Variance from the Zoning Board of Adjustments. All Major and Minor Site developments and condominium conversions must first go to the Planning Board.

Permit applications, with all necessary fees, must be applied for in person at the Building Department at Town Hall. Once the application is submitted, depending upon the complexity of the application, permit review and approvals take ten days. To schedule required inspections, call (603) 964-9800. Except for emergencies, a minimum of twenty-four-hour notice is needed to schedule an inspection.

Visit the Building Department office at the Town Hall between 7:00 a.m.- 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday or go to the Building Department page on the Town Website: <https://www.ryenh.gov/208/Building-Department> for information on permit requirements, applications, fees, building codes, required inspections, and information related to construction in Rye.

IF YOU ARE NOT SURE WHETHER YOU NEED A PERMIT FOR YOUR PROJECT,
CONSULT WITH THE BUILDING DEPARTMENT BEFORE YOU START ANY WORK.



FINANCE DEPARTMENT

The Finance Department maintains the Town's fiscal records and financial systems. It manages all internal and external financial reporting requirements, including payroll, State (Massachusetts and Maine) and Federal withholding taxes, W-2s, and Workers' Compensation. It also oversees accounts payable and accounts receivable — billing, collecting, and recording departmental fees and charges, daily deposits, financial account analysis, and special departmental projects.

After years of having a full-time Finance Director on staff, the Select Board voted in 2026 to contract this work to Municipal Resources, Inc. (MRI).

<https://www.ryenh.gov/m/directory/department?did=49>



FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Rye Fire & Rescue Department has a complement of full-time firefighter EMT's and part time or "paid on call" firefighters and EMT's, with several personnel trained as paramedics. The Rye Fire Department is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with 4 personnel per shift. The Rockingham County Sheriff's Department is the primary dispatch center for the Rye Fire Department. They dispatch all emergency calls 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The services provided by the Fire Department include fire suppression, emergency medical services (EMS), fire code enforcement, fire prevention and safety programs, hazardous materials response, woodland/marsh fire threats, water rescue, technical rescues, car seat inspections, blood pressure checks, station tours, fire apparatus visits, and more.

The Fire Prevention Bureau is responsible for inspection of all public and commercial buildings to ensure fire safety and compliance with fire and life safety codes. The Bureau reviews plans for new construction and building modifications, investigates fires for cause and origin, and is involved in all fire prevention education and training programs.

IN AN EMERGENCY, DIAL 911

Physical Address:

Rye Public Safety Building
555 Washington Road
Rye, NH 03870

Phone: 603-964-6411

Fax: 603-964-9894

Department website:

<https://www.ryenh.gov/270/Fire-Department>



Follow on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RyeFireRescue>





**RYE EMERGENCY &
NON-EMERGENCY
CONTACTS**

EMERGENCY: DIAL 911

For all other questions or inquiries
(including accidental & false alarms),
please contact the applicable non-emergency
number, or visit the links below.

RYE POLICE	(603) 964-5522 ryepolice.us
RYE FIRE	(603) 964-6411 ryenh.gov/270/Fire-Department
POISON CONTROL	(800) 222-1222 poison.org
PUBLIC WORKS	(603) 964-5300 ryenh.gov/354/Public-Works
TOWN OF RYE	(603) 964-5523 ryenh.gov

POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Rye Police Department is a dedicated and diverse group of professionals who are committed to working with the community to make the Town of Rye a safe and desirable place to live, work, and visit. The Police Department's mission is to partner with the community, service providers and other law enforcement agencies to solve problems, enforce the law, and improve public safety in a manner that is fair, impartial, transparent, and consistent.

Uniformed officers perform responsible and visible law enforcement duties, including patrol, investigations, traffic control, and a variety of other duties to preserve the peace and protect life and property in the Town, and enforce State laws and local ordinance and by-laws.

Members of the Rye Police Department proactively engage the public to understand the expectations that the citizens have of their police officers. The Department is committed to earning and maintaining the community's trust and strives to do this by encompassing positive values, core beliefs and holding itself to the highest ethical standards. The Department provides services on a 24-hour basis and regular office hours are Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

IN AN EMERGENCY, CALL 911.

Physical Address

555 Washington Road
Rye, NH 03870

Business phone: (603) 964-7450 (Monday-Friday, 8:00 AM-4:30 PM)

Fax: (603) 964-7458

Dispatch (24/7, via Rockingham County Sheriff's Department): (603) 964-5521 – to report a crime, file a report, or request an officer

Report a crime anonymously: Seacoast Crime Stoppers, (603) 431-1199,
www.seacoastcrimestoppers.com

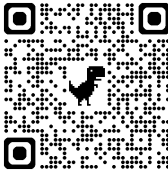
www.facebook.com/SeacoastCrimeStoppers/

No concern is too minor. Remember the small issue or concern may be the information police need to solve a crime or help prevent a crime from occurring.

Online: www.ryepolice.us – forms, pistol permits, vacation home registration



Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ryepolice>



Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/ryepolice/>

The message is: SEE IT, HEAR IT, REPORT IT.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

The Public Works Department is responsible for public road maintenance (including paving and repair), snow removal, and operation of the Transfer Station.

The Transfer Station is at 309 Grove Road and is open Tuesday through Saturday, 7:30 AM-3:45 PM. Most trash, yard waste, and recyclable material can be disposed of at the Transfer Station. Only items from Rye will be accepted at the Transfer Station. A nominal fee is charged for some items such as computer monitors, batteries, stuffed furniture and insulation. The Transfer Station recycles fluorescent bulbs and similar mercury bulbs and ballast from fluorescent fixtures, for a nominal fee. Other mercury products, such as rechargeable batteries, thermostats and cell phones are accepted at no cost. Go to the Public Works page on the Rye website for a complete list of items that carry fees and items that will not be accepted at the Transfer Station. Free compost, sand-salt mix, and loam are all available at the Transfer Station for Rye residents. For a video overview of the Transfer Station, including its 20 different recycling stations for different types of items:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gGndVD9KILg>

The brush dump is open Tuesdays and Saturdays, 7:45 AM–3:45 PM.

The Swap Shop, where residents can drop off or pick up reusable household items free of charge, is open Wednesday through Friday, 9:00 AM–3:00 PM.

Recycling is mandatory in Rye. Do your part. It saves the Town of Rye money and helps the environment.

For a complete fee schedule and list of accepted items:

<https://www.ryenh.gov/DocumentCenter/View/432/Transfer-Station-Fees>

Check the Public Works page on the town website: <https://www.ryenh.gov/354/Public-Works>



RECREATION DEPARTMENT AND COMMISSION

The Town of Rye Recreation Department operates under the direction of the Rye Recreation Commission. The Rye Recreation Department ensures that a broad range of recreation opportunities are available and accessible for all residents and that they are consistent with the needs and interests of the community and the space and resources available. The Recreation Commission consists of seven members appointed by the Select Board. They meet monthly to conduct business and meetings are open to the public.

The Recreation Department offers a variety of programs, including lessons for golf, skateboarding, indoor tennis, skiing, snowboarding, and music. Basketball and soccer leagues are available. Offerings also include yoga and Gymboree classes, courses for babysitters, adult & infant CPR/first aid, knitting workshops, HoRYEzons summer camps, and Lego robotics programs. In addition, there is an After School Program open to kindergarten through fifth grade students.

The Recreation Area is located at 55 Recreation Road in Rye and is comprised of the Flash Jenness Memorial Little League Field, Ralph Morang Athletic Field, Recreation House, Recreation Modular and Playground. There is a teen center and an over-55 activity group at the Congregational Church known as “the Wave.” For more information contact Rye Recreation at (603)964-6281. <https://www.ryenh.gov/667/Recreation-Commission>



WELFARE DEPARTMENT

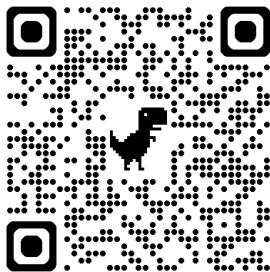
New Hampshire towns are required by law to provide General Assistance to residents in need. Rye does not operate its own Welfare Department and has outsourced it to the City of Portsmouth's Welfare Department, in consultation with the Rye Town Administrator.

The Welfare Department assists residents in need with General Assistance to ensure access to food, shelter and medical care. It determines eligibility, provides guidelines and application assistance and explains applicant's responsibilities and rights. Assistance funds are provided by the Town of Rye, while the eligibility and need are handled by the Portsmouth Welfare Department in consultation with the Rye Town Administrator. The Director of the Portsmouth Welfare Department can also direct applicants to other programs for which they may qualify, if they are ineligible for General Assistance, or if their needs exceed that which is covered by General Assistance.

Those interested in information about or applying for General Assistance should contact the Portsmouth Welfare Department at wfdept@cityofportsmouth.com. The phone number for the Welfare Department is (603) 610-7267.

<https://www.ryenh.gov/509/Welfare-Office>

<https://www.portsmouthnh.gov/welfare>



ANIMAL CONTROL

Animal Control is provided by a full-time Animal Control Officer, under the supervision of the Town of Rye Police Department. Beginning the Saturday before Memorial Day through the Saturday after Labor Day, dogs are not permitted on Town Beaches between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. The only exception is the area between Wallis Sands State Park and Odiorne State Park where dogs and people are allowed, except between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m. when the beach is closed. Owners are subject to a fine for any violation.

Leashes are not required; however, dogs must be under control by means of personal presence and attention as will reasonably control the conduct of such dog. Dog owners must immediately pick up any waste left by the dog “from public property and dispose of it on their own property or otherwise properly dispose of same.” Owners are subject to a fine for failure to do so. Leaving a dog in a car unattended is a misdemeanor for a first offense. RSA 644:8-a.

Dog license information and ordinances can be found here:

<https://www.ryenh.gov/491/Dog-License-Information>

<https://www.ryenh.gov/DocumentCenter/View/5017/Information-for-Dog-Owners>

<https://www.ryenh.gov/341/Relevant-Ordinances>

RYE BEACHES

Rye is home to eight miles of Atlantic coastline.

Beach Parking stickers for residents are available at the Town Clerk's office at the Town Hall, and proof of residency is required to obtain a sticker. Revenue obtained by the Town from the sale of parking stickers is allocated between the Town's General Fund (25%) and beach-related expenses (75%). Each property is entitled to 3 beach stickers; 1st two are \$30 and the 3rd is \$35.

There are Town lifeguards on Rye's beaches during the season, beginning in mid-June through Labor Day, on a schedule currently set by the Fire Department. These Town protected beaches include Sawyers Beach, Jenness Beach, and Wallis Sands.

The State of New Hampshire beaches of Jenness and Wallis in Rye also have rules about dogs, surfing and other activities.

Residents with questions and suggestions should contact the Rye Fire Department at (603) 964-6411 or Rye Police Department at (603) 964-7450.

<https://www.ryenh.gov/454/Town-Beach-Information>

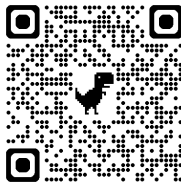
<https://www.ryenh.gov/DocumentCenter/View/507/Beach-Parking-Permits-Policy-2025>

RYE SCHOOLS

The Rye School District has both an elementary school and a middle school that serve over 430 students. Through the AREA (Authorized Regional Enrollment Area) agreement, Rye high school students attend Portsmouth High School.

Each of the Rye schools has a Principal, Guidance Counselor, and Nurse and both share a Food Service Director and Special Education Coordinator. To receive information about how to enroll a student, you may call the Rye Elementary School for grades K-4 or the Rye Junior High School for grades 5-8.

The Rye School District is part of School Administrative Unit 50 – (SAU 50) which includes the school districts of Greenland, Newington and New Castle. The SAU50 administrators oversee functions including payroll, human resources, finances, accounting, special education, professional development and curriculum. SAU50 is managed by the SAU50 School Board which includes all school board members from the four towns. The meeting times for the SAU Board can be found at the website www.SAU50.org.



RYE DISTRICTS

Rye has three separate districts alongside town government: Rye Beach Village District, Jenness Beach Precinct, and Rye Water District.

In this section:

- Rye Beach Village District
- The Jenness Beach Precinct
- Rye Water District

RYE BEACH VILLAGE DISTRICT

(also known as the Rye Beach Precinct)

In 1900, the Portsmouth Electric Railway passed through Rye Beach, sparking tourism to its hotels and boarding houses. Ocean Boulevard was built in 1902, and in 1905 the Rye Beach Village District was established to serve summer residents with sidewalks, distinctive streetlights, water from outside Hampton, and fire hydrants—the first in Rye. By 1915, it also had a sewer system.

The Rye Beach Village District built its community building in 1919, housing its own post office (zip code 03871), police officer, and Rye’s first volunteer fire department. Historical landmarks include St. Andrews-by-the-Sea church, Abenaki Golf Club (1903), a private beach club (1900), and the Cable House, a key site for the first successful trans-Atlantic telegraph cable.

Today, the Rye Beach Precinct—about one square mile—has a few hundred residents, its own local government, and primary zoning authority granted in 1937. A Rye Beach Master Plan is available. Rye Beach Village District Zoning Ordinances can be found here.

<https://www.ryenh.gov/232/Rye-Beach-Village-District>



THE JENNESS BEACH PRECINCT

The Jenness Beach Precinct provides streetlights for a district in Rye which is contained between the Atlantic Ocean and Central Road from Cable Road at Ocean Boulevard south to the Dunes Motel. The Charter of the Precinct directs the three Commissioners to promote recreation in the beach district. The Commissioners have fought to maintain access for the public to the beach. The Commissioners serve for three-year terms which are staggered. One Commissioner is elected at the Precinct meeting held each year on the last Saturday in March.

The jurisdiction of the Jenness Beach Precinct Commissioners is limited to the street lighting, beach and road crossing signs and the water supply and hydrant rental from Aquarion. They maintain sixty-two lights. The Jenness Beach Precinct has no separate zoning jurisdiction.

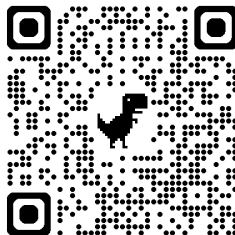
RYE WATER DISTRICT

The Rye Water District is a distinct and separate entity. There are three District Commissioners, a Water District Administrator and a Superintendent. The Rye Water District provides drinking water and hydrant service to a substantial portion of Rye [over 1800 customers]. The Rye Water District operates three wells, three storage tanks, a booster station, and 263 hydrants and maintains approximately 38 miles of water mains.

The mission of the Rye Water District is to provide the Rye Water District community with drinking water that meets or exceeds all current federal and state drinking water standards along with excellent customer service and environmental conservation.

The Rye Water District's annual budget is currently around \$2 million. The citizens of Rye approved a warrant article authorizing the Water District to spend up to \$15,900,000.00 to build a Water Treatment Plant for the town of Rye. Since that vote, new EPA standards make treating Rye water mandatory. Rye Water District is managed under the Town Meeting format, with the annual meeting held the second to last Saturday in March at Rye Junoir Hight at 10:00am

The commissioner's report can be found here [Rye Water District Commissioner's Report](#). For more information on the Rye Water District, please visit [Rye Water District](#).



APPENDIX

Reference material that supports the handbook including statistics, event calendars, budget charts, and contact listings.

In this section:

- Rye Statistics
- Annual Events
- Rye Beaches, Trails, and Parks
- Rye Town and School Budget
- Rye Civic League Budget Presentation Summary
- Town of Rye Contacts
- Town Hall Staff
- About This Handbook

RYE STATISTICS

The 2020 census figures, reported (in 2021) show the population and other statistics of Rye, NH as follows:

Statistical Question	Rye 2010	Rye 2020	Rockingham County 2020	New Hampshire 2020
People	5,306	5,543	314,176	1,377,529
Men	51.19%	52.8%	49.5%	49.6%
Women	48.81%	47.2%	50.5%	50.4%
Persons under 5 years		3.2%	4.6%	4.7%
Persons under 18		14.3%	19.1%	18.8%
Persons 65 or older		28.4%	18.6%	18.7%
Bachelor's Degree or higher		62.1%	32.1%	37%
White	95%	98.2%	60.1%	93.1%
Asian	0.01%	0.7%	5.9%	3.0%
Other, Hispanic, Black, Native American	4.99%	1.1%	34%	3.9%
Median Household Income	\$120,792	\$112,054	\$93,756	\$76,768
Average Household Size (people)	2.43	2.29	2.51	2.46
Median owner-occupied housing value		\$697,900	\$326,300	\$261,700
Per capita income	\$48,991	\$86,541	\$47,222	\$40,003

ANNUAL EVENTS

THE ANNUAL RYE HOLIDAY PARADE

The Annual Holiday Parade is held on a Sunday in early December along Washington Road from Webster at Rye to the Rye Junior High School. It is sponsored by the Town of Rye and coordinated by the Rye Fire Fighters Association and the Rye Lions Club.

MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY

The Memorial Day Ceremony is held annually in the Central Cemetery surrounding the flag. Sponsored by the Town of Rye under the direction of the Rye Recreation Department with refreshments provided by the Rye Heritage Commission.

FOURTH OF JULY AT PARSONS FIELD

Celebrate with a live band and fireworks at dusk on or around July 4th sponsored by the Town of Rye under the direction of the Rye Recreation Department.

TOWN PICNIC AT PARSONS FIELD

Hosted by the Rye Community Picnic Committee and Rye Recreation. Bring your own picnic food (tables and chairs provided) and enter the Apple Pie Contest. Free, registration required.

Date: Sunday, September 13, 2026, 12:00–2:00 PM

Location: Parsons Field

Register: (603) 964-6281 or online at app.seemylegacy.com/community/2736/campaign/9066

RYE HISTORICAL SOCIETY & TOWN MUSEUM

A 501(c)(3) nonprofit preserving Rye's history through exhibits, walking tours, trolley tours, and community events. 10 Olde Parish Road, (603) 436-9278, ryenhistoricalociety.org.

For more information about Town of Rye events visit: <http://www.town.rye.nh.us>

RYE BEACHES, TRAILS, AND PARKS

<https://www.ryenh.gov/450/Pictures-of-Beach-Access-in-Rye>

Beach Access Points

Wallis Rd Extension	E Street	Philbricks Beach
Bass Beach	F Street	Sawyers Beach
Cable Rd	Old Beach Way	Sunrise Path
Concord Pt	Old Town Way	Sanders Poynt

In addition, there are beaches at Odiorne State Park, Rye Harbor State Park, Wallis Sands State Beach and Jennes Beach State Park

Rye Conservation Trails

Airfield Trail	Jim Raynes Forest	Seavy Acres
Brown Lane Farm	Marden Woods	Town Forest
Cedar Run Trail	Rand Forest	White Horse Farm

Parks

Rye Junior High, Rye Elementary School, Parsons Field, Granger Park, Odiorne State Park, Rye Harbor State Park. There is also the Outer Marker Park.

RYE TOWN AND SCHOOL BUDGET

Residents of Rye contribute to multiple entities that raise funds through taxes. These groups are all independent and include the Rye Town Government, the Schools, the Water District, the Rye Beach District, the Jenness Beach District and Rockingham County.

The Rye School Budget

Similarly, the Rye School Board establishes the School Budget and the Rye Budget Committee reviews the Rye School Budget and votes to “recommend” or “not recommend”. The process begins with the school staff requisition for appropriations to be included in the proposed budget. The principals meet with the Superintendent of Schools, Assistant Superintendent, Special Education Director and Business Administrator to review the budgetary requests, including special education appropriations.

The administrative team collaboratively prepares the preliminary proposed budget document which is presented to the School Board for its review and vote. The Board also reviews Warrant Articles to determine whether to recommend or not recommend the Articles. The Board also prepares a default budget in accordance with RSA 40:13.

RYE CIVIC LEAGUE BUDGET PRESENTATION SUMMARY

The Rye Civic League presents an annual analysis of the Town and School budget. Selected charts and tables from that presentation are provided below. For an explanation of how Rye's tax rate and budget process work, see **Understanding Your Rye Tax Bill**.

2026 Town Operating Budget: \$13,972,329

2026 School Budget: \$19,206,618

Rockingham County contribution: 4.7% (\$2,606,852)

For the full presentation:

<https://ryecivicleague.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/RCL-2026-Budget-Analysis-Post-Delib.pdf>

Rye Taxes and Budget

Table One shows what a household is paying each year for the different services and department services for those long-term investments.

Table 1: Taxes for Services in Rye based upon Property Value

What a household contributes to Town and School Government in 2026 (using the 2025 tax rate)

Sewer is not taxed, funded by user fees.

			Assessed Value of Home		
			\$ 500,000	\$ 750,000	\$ 1,000,000
Category	2026P Budget	% of Budget (Town + School)	\$ 4,190	\$ 6,285	\$ 8,380
Genl. Government	\$ 3,273,283	10.0%	\$ 418	\$ 627	\$ 836
DPW	\$ 2,990,338	9.1%	\$ 382	\$ 573	\$ 764
Fire	\$ 2,958,342	9.0%	\$ 378	\$ 567	\$ 756
Police	\$ 2,274,938	6.9%	\$ 291	\$ 436	\$ 581
Other Services	\$ 879,563	2.7%	\$ 112	\$ 169	\$ 225
Library	\$ 864,521	2.6%	\$ 110	\$ 166	\$ 221
Sewer excl. debt svc.	\$ 547,222				
Recreation	\$ 414,531	1.2%	\$ 52	\$ 78	\$ 104
Debt Service	\$ 181,814	0.6%	\$ 23	\$ 35	\$ 46
Capital Outlay	\$ 135,000	0.4%	\$ 17	\$ 26	\$ 34
School	\$ 18,832,722	57.4%	\$ 2,405	\$ 3,608	\$ 4,811
Total with School	\$ 33,352,273	100.0%	\$ 4,189	\$ 6,284	\$ 8,378

Does NOT include any of the warrant articles – so more will be paid for some services. Based on 2025 tax rate

Table 2: 2026 Tax Rate Overview

2025 Tax Rate: Overview \$8.37

Municipal Tax Rate Calculation				
		Tax Effort	Valuation	Municipal Tax Rate
Municipal (Town)		\$7,391,737	\$3,306,775,900	\$2.24
County		\$2,606,852	\$3,288,099,600	\$0.79
Schools	Local	\$12,180,325	\$3,288,099,600	\$3.68
	State	\$5,474,271	\$3,291,999,300*	\$1.66
Total		\$27,653,185		\$8.37

Village Tax Rate Calculation				
	Tax Effort	Valuation	Village Tax Rate	Total Tax Rate
Jenness Beach	\$121,590	\$715,233,400	\$0.17	\$8.54
Rye Beach District	\$143,163	\$386,927,700	\$0.37	\$8.74
Rye Water District	\$1,156,914	\$2,103,480,200	\$0.55	\$8.92
valuation without utilities				

[2025 DRA Tax Breakdown form](#)

Table 3: Debt Service

10 Year Trend: Big four up, debt down, capital outlays slowing

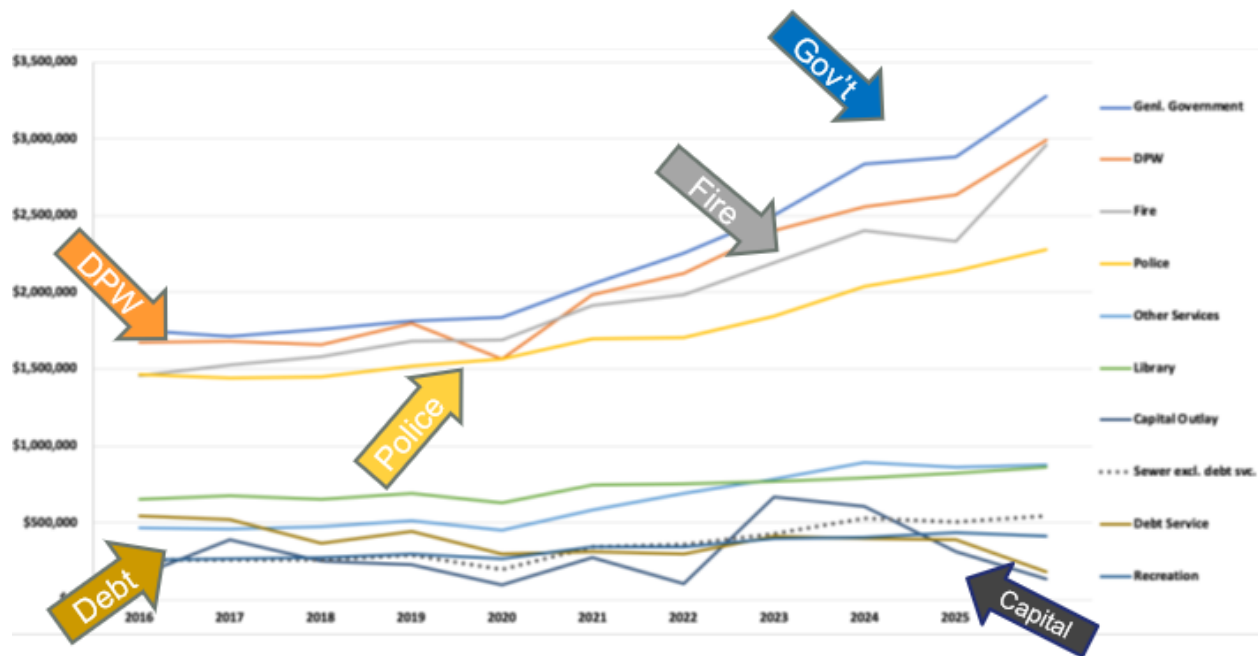


Table 4: Town Operating Budget 2026 Plan

Town Operating Budget 2026 Plan vs. 2025 Budget % is down slightly.

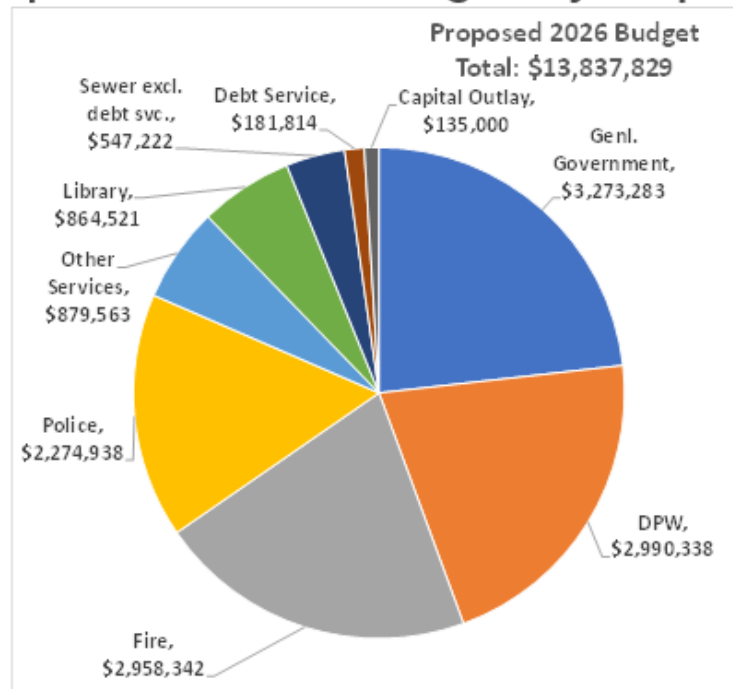
Of the Total Town (w/ capital outlay and funds) salaries/benefits are about 64% of town spend.

Category	2025	2026P	2026P vs 2025 \$Change	2026P vs 2025 %Change	% of Operating Budget	10 Year \$ Change	10 Year CAGR
Genl. Government	\$ 2,881,790	\$ 3,273,283	\$ 391,493	13.6%	22.5%	\$ 1,523,168	6.5%
DPW	\$ 2,630,030	\$ 2,990,338	\$ 360,308	13.7%	20.6%	\$ 1,311,923	5.9%
Fire	\$ 2,328,416	\$ 2,958,342	\$ 629,926	27.1%	20.4%	\$ 1,500,936	7.3%
Police	\$ 2,140,750	\$ 2,274,938	\$ 134,188	6.3%	15.7%	\$ 808,644	4.5%
Other Services	\$ 860,303	\$ 879,563	\$ 19,260	2.2%	6.1%	\$ 413,574	6.6%
Library	\$ 825,333	\$ 864,521	\$ 39,188	4.7%	6.0%	\$ 207,181	2.8%
Sewer excl. debt svc.	\$ 507,137	\$ 547,222	\$ 40,085	7.9%	3.8%	\$ 285,708	7.7%
Recreation	\$ 434,265	\$ 414,531	\$ (19,734)	-4.5%	2.9%	\$ 153,333	4.7%
Debt Service	\$ 390,509	\$ 181,814	\$ (208,695)	-53.4%	1.3%	\$ (361,101)	-10.4%
Capital Outlay	\$ 310,490	\$ 135,000	\$ (175,490)	-56.5%	0.9%	\$ (26,500)	-1.8%
Total Operating Budget	\$ 13,309,022	\$ 14,519,551	\$ 1,210,529	9.1%		\$ 5,816,866	5.3%

	2022	2023	2024	2025	1 Year Change		4 Year Change	
Budget Category	Budget	Budget	Budget	Proposed	\$ Change	% Change	\$ Change	% Change
Saleries/Benefits	\$ 7,430,315	\$ 8,143,944	\$ 8,993,583	\$ 9,267,111	\$ 273,528	3%	\$ 1,836,796	25%
Operations	\$ 3,299,876	\$ 3,672,877	Budget Committee did not get this break out for 2025					23%
Capital Outlay	\$ 125,679	\$ 657,414	\$ 719,632	\$ 462,466	\$ (257,166)	-36%	\$ 336,787	268%
Warrants	\$ 621,000	\$ 468,000	\$ 636,500	\$ 526,600	\$ (109,900)	-17%	\$ (94,400)	-15%
Total	\$ 11,476,870	\$ 12,942,231	\$ 14,462,658	\$ 14,326,152	\$ (136,506)	-1%	\$ 2,849,282	25%

Table 5: 2026 Town Budget breakdown by Department

2026 Proposed Town Budget by Department



General Government includes:

Executive Office, Town Clerk, Tax Collector, Assessing, Finance Office, Legal, Zoning Board, Planning Board, Building Inspection, Town Custodian, Town Hall Facility, and Insurance.

Other Services Include:

Health Officer, Animal Control, Mosquito Control, Direct Assistance, Cemetery, Beaches, Land Management, Patriotic Purposes, Historic District, Heritage Commission, Conservation and Other Services.

Sewer is not taxed, but funded through user fees

Table 6: 2026/2027 SCHOOL BUDGET

2026/27 School Budget by Category

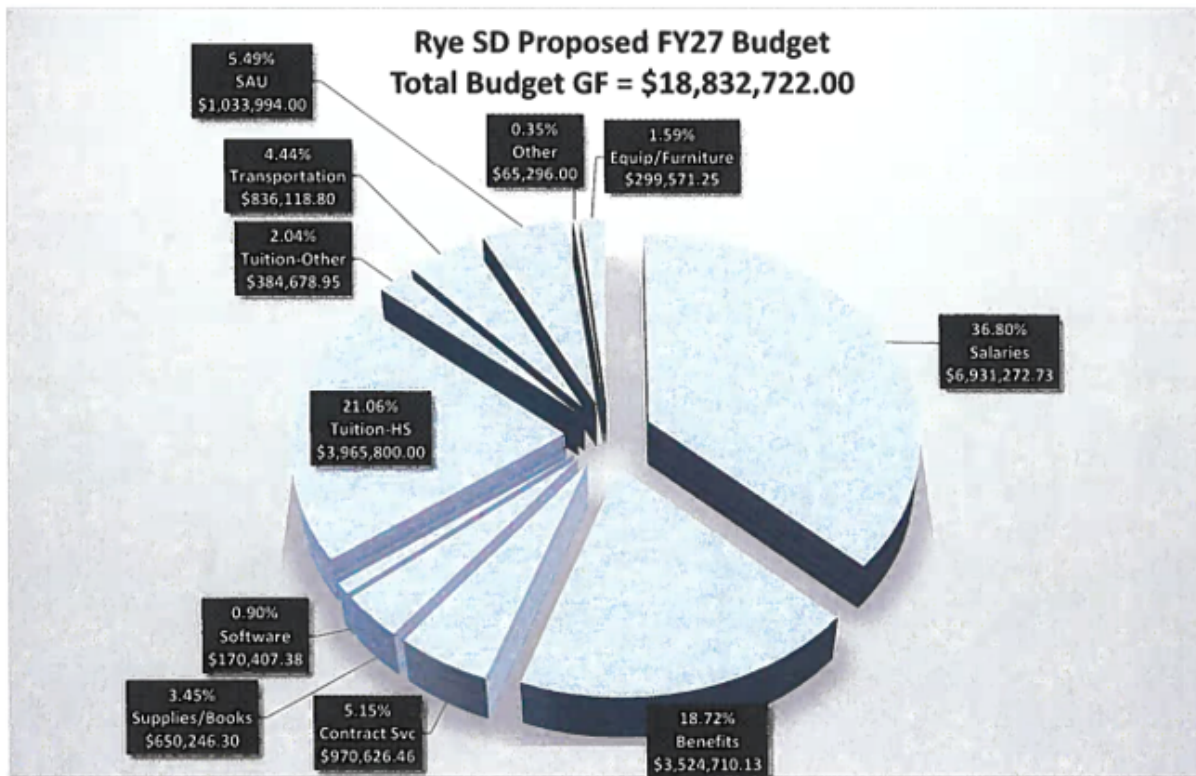
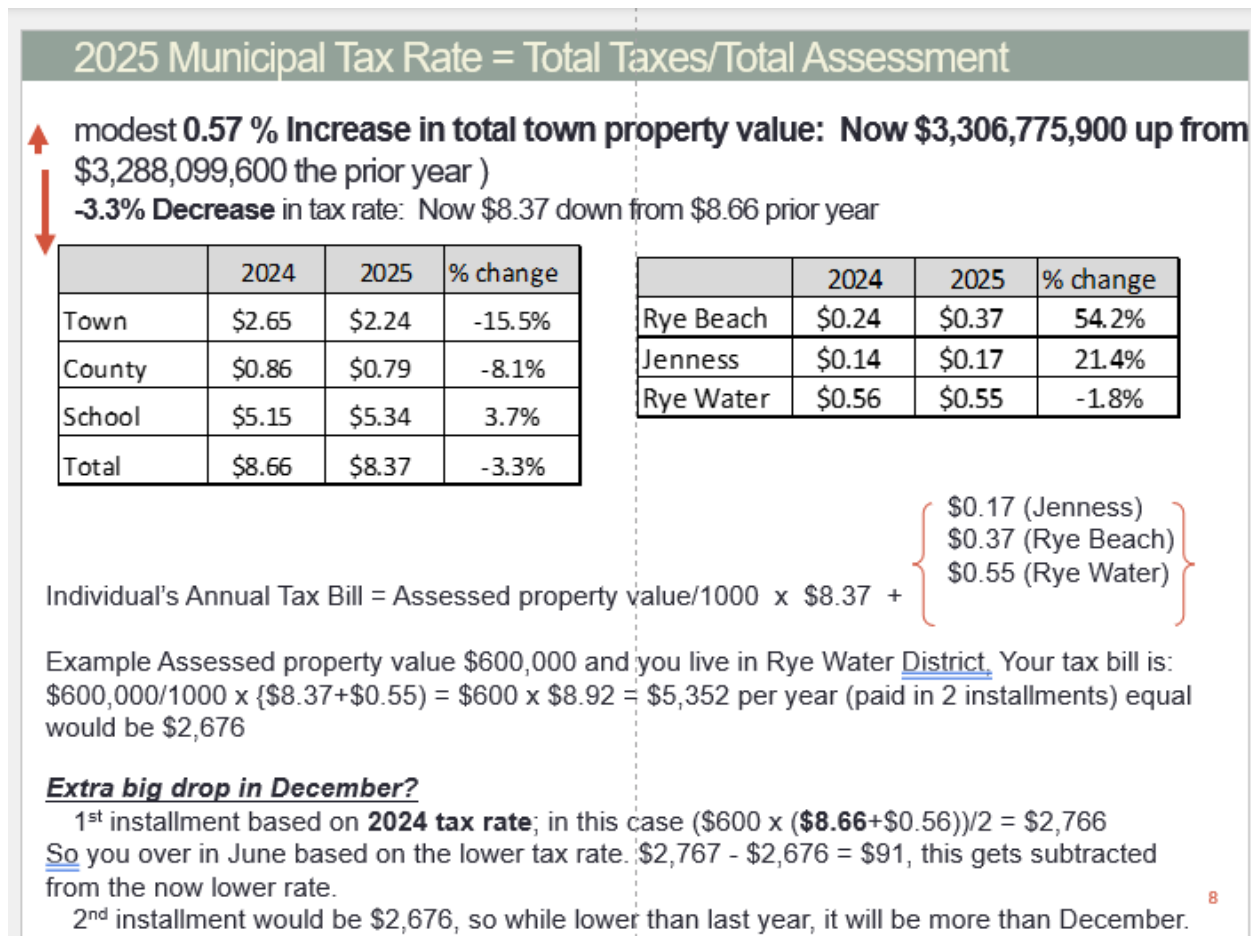


Chart created by SAU 50 Finance Director

How the Tax rate is established.

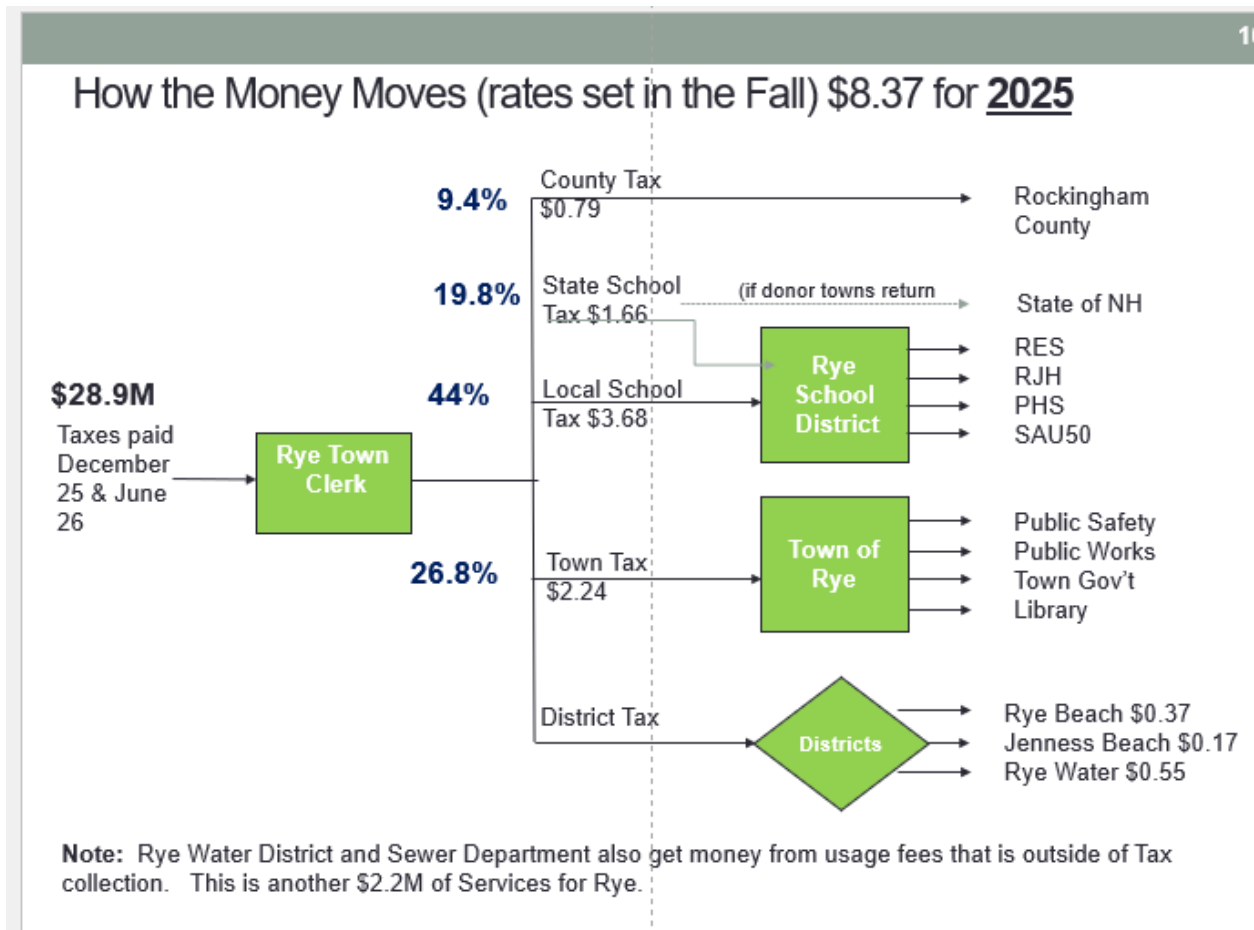
The chart below shows how the rates for 2026 were distributed. Note these percentages were established in the Fall of 2024, based on the 2024 budget voted on in March of 2024. The 2025 tax rate for your December 2025 bill will be set in November 2025.



Why is your December tax bill higher than your June Tax bill? There are two components to this. The June bill assumes the tax rate will be the same as the previous year and that the assessed property value has not changed. With the December Tax bill, the tax rate could have increased, and the individual's assessed property value could have changed. Therefore,

a) Tax rates went up, so you are paying more taxes

- b) Since tax rate did go up, you “underpaid” your June bill. What you “underpaid” in June is added to your December bill.



For additional information and the full presentation, see the RCL 2026 Budget Presentation:
<https://ryecivicleague.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/RCL-2026-Budget-Analysis-Post-Delib.pdf>



TOWN OF RYE CONTACTS

FIRE-POLICE-AMBULANCE EMERGENCY 911

PUBLIC ACCESS

Town Hall: 8:00 AM-4:30 PM, Monday – Friday
Tax Collector: 8:00 AM-4:30 PM, Monday – Thursday & 8:00 AM-Noon, Fridays
Town Clerk: 8:00 AM-4:30 PM, Monday – Thursday & 8:00 AM-Noon, Fridays
Building Dept: 7:00 AM-4:30 PM, Monday – Friday
Library: 9:00 AM-5:00 PM, Monday, Friday
9:00 AM-8:00 PM, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
9:00 AM-3:00 PM, Saturday
Public Works: 7:00 AM-3:30 PM, Monday – Friday
Recycling: 7:30 AM-3:45 PM, Tuesday-Saturday

CONTACT

Town Hall 8:00 AM-4:30 PM, Monday–Friday All Departments (603) 964-5523;
Fax (603) 964-1516
Cemetery (603) 817-0066
Welfare Portsmouth Welfare (603) 610-7267

The internet address: <http://www.town.rye.nh.us> is the official website of the Town of Rye. On it, you'll find this Handbook and the following:

- Contact information for Rye's Boards, Commissions, Committees and Departments, along with descriptions and guidelines for working with each of them
- Town Officials' contact information
- Hours of operations for departments and facilities
- Schedule, agendas, and minutes for meetings of Town Boards, Commissions and Committees
- Forms and permits applications (some may be downloaded)
- Rye Annual Report
- Rye Code (includes Zoning Ordinances and Master Plan)
- Rye Capital Improvement Plan

Rye Town Hall 10 Central Road, Rye, NH 03870 Rye Town Hall Annex 500 Washington Road, PO Box 515, Rye, NH 03870 Rye Public Works & Recycling 309 Grove Road, Rye, NH 03870 Rye Recreation 55 Recreation Road, Rye, NH 03870	Rye Sewer Commission Rye Beach Post Office, 2 nd Floor Police & Fire Departments 555 Washington Road, Rye, NH Rye Public Library 581 Washington Road, Rye, NH Rye Water District 60 Sagamore Road, Rye, NH
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<https://www.ryenh.gov/m/directory>



TOWN OF RYE, NH DIRECTORY

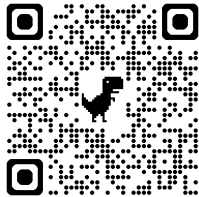
DEPARTMENT	CONTACT	EMAIL	TELEPHONE <i>*Area Code 603</i>
Administrator	Matt Scruton, Town Administrator	mscruton@town.rye.nh.us	964-5523 x117
Assessing	Ed Tinker, Assessors	etinker@mrigov.com	
Building Department	Amber Harrison, Building Inspector / C.E.O.	aharrison@town.rye.nh.us	964-9800
	Vincent Bauer, Deputy Building Insp.	vbauer@town.rye.nh.us	964-9800
	Sandy Dufresne, Admin. Asst.	sdufresne@town.rye.nh.us	964-9800
	Madisyn Garrity, Building Dept. Assistant	mgarrity@town.rye.nh.us	964-9800 x 162
Cemetery Superintendent	John Coscia		603-817-0066
Fire and Rescue	Eric Lambert, Fire Chief	elambert@ryenh.gov	964-6411 x401
	Kevin Wunderly, Deputy Chief	kwunderly@town.rye.nh.us	964-6411 x403 Emergency 911
Land Use Asst.	Kara Campbell, AICP	kcampbell@town.rye.nh.us	964-5523 x115
Planning Board	Kimberly Reed, Planning and Zoning Administrator	kreed@town.rye.nh.us	379-8081
Police	Scott Blaisdell, Police Chief & EM Director	sblaisdell@town.rye.nh.us	964-7450 Emergency 911
Public Works	Jason Rucker, Director	jrucker@town.rye.nh.us	964-5300
	Dan Barron, Highway Foreman Kelly Dallaire, Administrative Assistant	dbarron@town.rye.nh.us	964-2511
Recreation	Dyana Martin, Director	dmartin@town.rye.nh.us	964-6281
	Gracie Doherty, Assistant Director	gdoherly@town.rye.nh.us	964-6281
	Dennis Okyere, Sports & Afterschool Program Director	dokyere@town.rye.nh.us	964-6281
Rye Public Library	Sandra Licks, Director	director@ryepubliclibrary.org	964-8401
Rye Water District	Arik Jones, Superintendent	ajones@ryewaterdistrict.gov	436-2596 x2
	Brian Goetz, Business Administrator	bgoetz@ryewaterdistrict.gov	436-2596 x3
	Dyana Ledger, Business Manager	dledger@ryewaterdistrict.gov	436-2596 x1
Select Board	Howard Kalet E. Scott McQuade Suzanne Barton John Tuttle Jessica Doucette, Executive Assistant	selectmen@town.rye.nh.us emcquade@town.rye.nh.us sbarton@town.rye.nh.us jtuttle@town.rye.nh.us jdoucette@town.rye.nh.us	

Sewer Commission	Lee Arthur, Director	sewer@town.rye.nh.us larthur@town.rye.nh.us	964-6815
Town Clerk/ Tax Collector	Amy Thibodeau, Town Clerk/Tax Collector Lindsay Murphy, Deputy Lori Lavigne, Assistant	athibodeau@town.rye.nh.us lmurphy@town.rye.nh.us llavigne@town.rye.nh.us	964-8562 964-8562 964-8562
Treasurer	Susan Philbrick	sphilbrick@town.rye.nh.us	964-5523 x 113
Zoning Board of Adjustment	Kimberly Reed, Administrator	kreed@town.rye.nh.us	379-8081

RYE SCHOOLS

[Rye Elementary School](#), 461 Sagamore Road. Principal: Michelle Pitts.
(603) 436-4731.

[Rye Junior High School](#), 501 Washington Road, Principal: Anne Gilbert.
(603) 964-5591



Town Officials

MODERATOR

(2-year term)

Nina Parrott 2026

SELECT BOARD

(3-year term)

Vacant

E. Scott McQuade

Suzanne Barton

Howard Kalet

John Tuttle

TOWN CLERK/TAX COLLECTOR

(3-year term)

Amy Thibodeau

TREASURER

(3-year term)

Susan Philbrick 2027

CEMETERY TRUSTEES

(3-year term)

Frank Drake 2028

Roger O. Philbrick 2029

Kenneth Moynahan 2027

SUPERVISORS OF THE CHECKLIST

(6-year term)

Madeline Chichester 2026

Karen Oliver 2028

Susan Philbrick 2030

Keriann Roman 2032

LIBRARY TRUSTEES

(3-year term)

JoAnne Hodgdon 2027

Victor D. Azzi 2028

Joe Marttila 2027

Caitlin Delaney 2028

Elizabeth Fairchild 2028

TRUSTEES OF TRUST FUNDS

(3-year term)

Robert Carrigg, Jr. 2026

Kerry S. Pope 2027

R. Christopher Nee 2028

BUDGET COMMITTEE

(3-year term)

Kate Dumas 2027

Douglas Abrams 2027

Steven Borne 2026

Elsie DiBella 2026

Tim Durkin 2028

Richard Furber 2028

Frank Drake – Rye Beach Village

District Representative

William Christo – Jenness Beach Village

District Representative

Scott Marion – Water District

Representative

PLANNING BOARD

(3-year term)

Patricia Losik 2028

JM Lord 2026

John Shaw 2028

Steven Borne 2027

Peter Moynahan 2027

Steve Carter (Alternate) 2028

William MacLeod (Alternate) 2026

Susan Shepcaro (Alternate) 2028

Elsie DiBella (Alternate) 2028

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

(3-year term)

Sandra Chororos 2026

Shawn Crapo 2026

Robert Patten 2027

Chris Piela 2027

John Tuttle 2028

Gregg Mikolaities (Alternate) 2026

Patrick Driscoll (Alternate) 2027

John Mitchell (Alternate) 2028

SEWER COMMISSION

(3-year term)

David Kohlhasse 2026

Susan Labrie 2027

John E. McCune Jr. 2028

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

(3-year term)

Kaitlyn Coffey 2026

David Choate 2027

Karen Stewart 2028

Stacey Smith 2027

Katharine Brown (Alternate) 2026

John Moynahan (Alternate) 2027

Michael Scott (Alternate) 2028

DEMOLITION REVIEW COMMITTEE

(3-year term)

David Choate 2026

Elizabeth Sanborn 2027

Frank Lagana 2028

Jennifer Madden (Alternate) 2026

Thomas Sedoric (Alternate) 2028

BEACH COMMITTEE

(3-year term)

Joan Zofnass 2029

Douglas Beattie 2027

Joe Leverone 2028

Nicole Boucher (Alternate) 2029

Coleen Penacho 2028

Chuck Latvis 2029

Gail Brown (Alternate) 2029

Frank Hwang (Alternate) 2029

Suzanne Barton

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

(3-year term)

Victor Odryna 2027

Hugh Lee 2028

Joseph Marttila 2028

Jennifer Madden (Alternate) 2028

Gary Terhune

Shawn Joyce 2028

Glen Suchocki 2027

HERITAGE COMMISSION

(3-year term)

Alex Herlihy 2028

Gail Hughes 2026

Peter White 2028

Frank Lagana 2026

David Choate 2027

Elizabeth Sanborn (Alternate) 2026

Bev Giblin (Alternate) 2027

Mae Bradshaw (Alternate)

RECREATION COMMISSION

(3-year term)

Corey Belden 2028

Richard Furber 2028

Brett Mulvey 2027

Joseph Persechino 2026

Marlene Veloso 2027

Stacy Krecklow 2026

Jonathan Fox 2028

MOSQUITO CONTROL COMMISSION

(3-year term)

Timothy Sanborn 2028

James Farrelly 2026

ENERGY COMMITTEE

(3-year term)

Howard Kalet 2028

Tom Pfau 2028

Lisa Sweet 2028

Carl Nicolino 2028

Frank Melanson 2028

Silas Proft 2028

Jay Mason 2028

RECYCLING EDUCATION COMMITTEE

(3-year term)

Pamela Helfrich 2026

Alex Herlihy 2026

Joyce Shaw 2027

Casey Willard 2027

Terri McGee 2026

RYE WATER DISTRICT

(3-year term)

Rosalie Lopresto 2026

Tom Mack 2027

Scott Marion 2028

RYE BEACH VILLAGE DISTRICT

(3-year term)

Frank Drake 2026, Chair

Garry Layman 2028

Shawn Crapo, Moderator

Rachel Bradt McCann, Clerk

Tim Durkin, Treasurer

Scott McQuade

JENNESS BEACH VILLAGE DISTRICT

(3-year term)

Robert R. Crapo 2027

Bill Christo 2028

REPRESENTATIVE TO ROCKINGHAM PLANNING COMMISSION

Phil Winslow

John Shaw

REPRESENTATIVES TO THE GENERAL COURT

(2-year term)

Dennis Malloy (Greenland) Rockingham D 24 2026

Peggy Balboni (Rye) Rockingham D 38 (floterial) 2026

TOWN HALL STAFF**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR**

Matt Scruton

SELECT BOARD'S OFFICE

Matt Scruton, Town Administrator

Jessica Doucette, Executive Assistant

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Eric Lambert, Finance Director

ASSESSING DEPARTMENT

Ed Tinker, Assessor

Municipal Resources, Inc.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

Amber Harrison, Building

Inspector/C.E.O.

Vincent Bauer, Deputy Building

Inspector

Sandra Dufresne, Administrative Assistant

Madisyn Garrity, Building Dept. Assistant

PLANNING/ZONING OFFICE

Kim Reed, Planning Administrator

Kara Campbell, Land Use Assistant

RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Dyana Martin, Recreation Director

Gracie Doherty, Assistant Director

Dennis Okyere, Sports & Afterschool Program Director

SEWER DEPARTMENT

Lee Arthur, Sewer Director

PUBLIC WORKS

Jason Rucker, Director

Dan Barron, Highway Foreman

Kelly Dallaire, Administrative Assistant

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Eric Lambert, Fire Chief

Kevin Wunderly, Deputy Fire Chief

POLICE DEPARTMENT & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Scott Blaisdell, Police Chief & EM Director

Alan Gould, Deputy EM Director

LIBRARY

Sandra Licks, Library Director

**TOWN CLERK/TAX COLLECTOR'S
OFFICE**

Amy Thibodeau, Town Clerk/Tax
Collector

Lindsay Murphy, Deputy Town
Clerk/Tax Collector

Lori Lavigne, Assistant Town Clerk/Tax
Collector

TREASURER'S OFFICE

Lindsay Murphy, Deputy Tow Clerk /
Tax Collector

HEALTH OFFICER

Gail A. Snow, MD

CEMETERY SUPERINTENDENT

John Coscia

HARBOR MASTER

Mike Moreau

FOREST FIRE WARDEN

Eric Lambert



Jenn Madden

Selling homes, building community.

603-247-2900

Office: 603-803-3730