

Mayor's Message
Rowlesburg: April 2026

Spring Cleanup. The hum of lawn mowers has been heard in Town for quite some time as the new mowing season is underway. But some folks observe the time-honored tradition of no yard work until after Easter. So, by now most lawns in town have received that first clip, and some multiple clips. I have observed that most citizens take pride in maintaining their property and do so by following the Town's property maintenance ordinance. My guess is that this majority would keep their property neat and orderly without any ordinance requiring them to do so. Neatness and order are favored by most folks. I agree that there is a sliding scale for achieving neatness and order, "different strokes for different folks" as the saying goes. The problem occurs when the owner's practice of property maintenance is completely off the scale and clutter accumulates, shrubbery becomes overgrown, the lawn needs mowed, and, in some cases, winter grit needs to be removed from the sidewalk in front of their home. This latter group often ignores the need for home maintenance as well. However, many of our citizens keep Rowlesburg a pleasant place to live. Thank you to this latter group.

Dumpster To Be In Place For Spring Cleanup. Coming in May, a dumpster will be available at the corner of Buffalo and Catherine Streets (R & B Auto) for citizens living within the Town limits. The days and hours when items can be placed in the dumpster are as follows: Friday May __, 2026 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Saturday, May __, 2026 from 8:00 a.m. to 12 noon. Please note the following rules for utilizing the Dumpster:

1. Customers are allowed one pickup load per paid garbage bill
2. Call Town Hall at 304-454-2441 during office hours to arrange for pick up if needed – items must be at the curb
3. The following items are strictly **PROHIBITED** in the dumpster: Tires, Batteries, Electronics, Microwaves, and any Refrigerator or Air Conditioner containing freon. No exceptions to this rule.

Building Permit Application. Just a reminder, for those contemplating repairs or construction on their property, please know that a Building Permit Application is to be submitted to Town Hall and approved by Town Council before any construction is started. Also, after the Building Permit Application is submitted to Town Hall, all applications are additionally submitted to the Town's Floodplain Coordinator who checks for any requirement needed for projects in the 100-year floodplain. The Floodplain Coordinator's turn-around for Building Permit Applications is usually a day or two. Although it's a bit slower here recently. A revision to the Building Permit Application in November of 2025, now requires that at any time that the ground is disturbed, i.e., when digging is to take place, Miss Utility must be called at 1-800-245-4848, to have all utility lines marked before the digging takes place.

Dog Attack. On Tuesday, April 14, a Rowlesburg citizen was attacked by a large dog running at large in Town. According to reports, the person exited their home to find two dogs on the front porch. While one dog was easily convinced to leave the porch, the second, larger dog, instead aggressively attacked the person. The attack dog only released its grip on the victim's arm when the victim was able to grab a chair to help with defense. Of course, as the victim was screaming from the pain of the attack, a neighbor heard the scream and came to offer help. After first aid was applied to stop the blood flow, it was quickly determined that a trip to the emergency room was needed. There, 12 stitches and a tetanus shot were among the treatments received to care for the bite wound.

The victim's physical and emotional pain could have been avoided if the dog's owner had complied with the Town's Dog Ordinance of 2004. One section of that Ordinance states that "No owner or keeper of any dog shall permit such dog to run at large within the corporate limits of the Town of Rowlesburg, and such dog shall at all times be on a leash, chain or other suitable device, whether head tax is paid thereon or not except when upon the premises of the owner ..." This incident could have been much more tragic had the victim been a child or a frail older person.

There is a reason that the Town Council passes Ordinances. It is to protect the health and safety of our citizens. This is true regardless of the Ordinance — Property Maintenance, Vacant Structure Registration, Dog Ordinance, Restriction on Keeping Livestock in Town, Building Permits, Parking, and others. Unkept property and uncontrolled animals all have the potential to harbor unwanted pests some which have been trying to kill us from the beginning of time. The incident described above shows that domestic animals will harm us under unaggravated circumstances. This is not to say that violations will bring on one of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, but when everyone complies with our ordinances, a safer, better quality of life will benefit all. Our "legal machinery" is limited ;therefore, bringing consequences to violators is limited.

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