

SELECT BOARD MEETING

TOWN OFFICE at 5:30PM

Wednesday, June 17, 2026

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82522918341?pwd=ZCbet1X1p7T2zClhArQiUmk3Y7H6Js.1>

Meeting ID: 825 2291 8341

Passcode: 382224

1.	Call to Order:	Establish Quorum:
2.	Accept Minutes of the June 3, 2026 Regular Meeting.	
3.	Visitor's Comments: ○	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ferry Service Update</i> • Sea Level Rise Update • Update on Up Island Public Safety Garage • Update on Public Safety Renovations
4.	Upcoming Meetings and Subcommittee Reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Board: June 29, 2026 • 	
5.	Town Manager Report: CLOSED Friday, June 19th for Juneteenth	Correspondence:
6.	Old Business: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review Data Supporting the Reason for Select Board Action/from 6/3/26. 2. 	
7.	New Business: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Set Date & Location for Summer Information Meeting. 2. Ballot for Election to Maine Municipal Association's Legislative Policy Committee. 3. Pollution Control Committee to Address Applying for Two Grants for the Dark Harbor Sewer Improvements: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Senator King's Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) Application, Federal Funding, \$1.8 million; 2. FFY 2026 Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) Proposed Project Funding, State Funding, \$3,8 million (Loan of \$2.8 million with \$1 million forgivable grant). 4. 	
8.	Other Business: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 	
9.	Approve Warrant: FY26 - #26	
10.	Appointments:	
11.	Chair Comments:	Individual Selectmen's Comments:
12.		
13.	Adjourn	

W: SB AGENDA 6 17 2026

MEMBERS:

Peter Anderson
2028

Stephen Pendleton
2027

Peter Rothschild
2028

Holly Fields
2029

Dylan Purington
2029

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DRAFT MINUTES

Members Present:

Chair Peter Rothschild, Vice Chair Peter Anderson, Stephen Pendleton, Holly Fields, Dylan Purington

Others Present:

Elana Kehoe, Julie Reidy, John King, Peter Willcox

Others Present via Zoom:

Harriet Bering, Dan Tutor, Amy Mulnix, Elizabeth Hayden, Daniel Frohling, Ted Pendleton, Kate Misenheimer, Sue Stafford, Kara Masters-Siekman

Call to Order: Chair Peter Rothschild called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM, and a quorum was established.

Minutes of May 20, 2026, Regular Meeting.

MOTION BY H. Fields, seconded by D. Purington, to approve the minutes of May 20, 2026 Regular Meeting, as written. No discussion. Motion passed, 5 yes, 0 no. Unanimous.

VISITOR COMMENTS/PETITIONS

Harriet Bering, Chair of the Energy Committee, stated she circulated the draft letter and application for a Community Action Grant. She asked the Select Board to sign a letter of support for the committee's grant application.

P. Anderson requested that the letter include signatures of all Board members. C. Reed will add the names and print a new version, and scan and send the signed copy to Harriet.

Julie Reidy asked if there will be any more discussion about the proposed excavator.

P. Rothschild read the email from Janet Anderson: "We are now looking at a Sany excavator. The Kubota that was quoted to us last December has gone up to \$72,890 from \$65,190. The 2026 Sany is \$61,889, giving us funds to purchase an appropriate trailer for towing, with brakes and lights, and keeping under 10,000 lbs. When Jordy is back from vacation, we will firm things up, and Tom is investigating the trailer with On the Road, and I'll see him after I return."

Julie stated she's had a couple of conversations with some contractors. She added she's kind of blown away that the Town would go for an excavator, considering the difference between a larger tractor and an excavator. She feels the excavator is limiting the crew. A

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tractor can do more, and will mow the sides of the road. They come with an attachment that can do roadside trimming, and reach past 15 feet.

S. Pendleton stated he had concerns after the last meeting, so had the specs on the excavator sent to him. The concept is the arm attachment, and the mulching tool that will do roadside trimming. That's the right tool for the job. Whatever machine it's attached to is up for discussion.

Discussion about the tools. Julie feels a tractor is a more useful tool overall.

P. Anderson stated he's heard a similar concern from other people. While the excavator can do one of the tasks we want, there are other, presumably, comparably priced pieces of equipment that would allow us to do more. Is there room for conversation?

D. Purington asked about the primary use for the equipment. He's inclined to agree with Julie that a tractor may be a more versatile machine. Maybe we explore this more.

S. Pendleton suggested finding someone with expertise to assist Dave Dyer in finding the right equipment. We authorized the funding, but we're not here to determine what is purchased. The Town Manager and team should. But how do we address the concern?

P. Rothschild stated that Janet, Dave, and other appropriate individuals should get together and consider this alternative proposal. He doesn't know how we are currently doing the tasks that a tractor would do, but we were merely considering this from the point of view of being unable to trim the overhanging vegetation on the sides of the road.

Julie stated the Town literally thought they voted on buying a tractor, not an excavator. It was stated, and not corrected, at Town Meeting.

MOTION BY P. Anderson, seconded by H. Fields, to turn this email back to Janet Anderson and say that the Board has concerns about the purchase of a proper piece of equipment, and would like to research it further. No further discussion. Motion passed, 5 yes, 0 no. Unanimous.

Julie thanked the Board for listening. Tax dollars are critical right now.

Comment in the Zoom chat from Amy Mulnix: If the Town has a list of needs for equipment, then ask someone to match the need with the right piece of equipment. Union Equipment is very helpful...

P. Anderson replied that we would be wise to turn to the people who have done these jobs for us in the past.

PUBLIC HEARINGS FOR VICTUALER RENEWALS

The Slate of Victualer Renewals:

- Tarratine Golf & Yacht Clubs
- Big Island Grill

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MOTION BY S. Pendleton, seconded by P. Anderson, to enter into Public Hearing for Victualer Renewals. No discussion. Motion passed, 5 yes, 0 no. Unanimous.

- P. Rothschild stated he understands that the Tarratine Club is waiting for the state to do a water test, and that we can approve this pending their supplying this test.
- P. Anderson stated that we pushed the Tarratine application to this week because they didn't have their water test results. We would be wise to not approve it now without those same results.
- P. Rothschild stated that the test has to be through the state.
- C. Reed stated that according to Janet's memo, they don't open until June 22nd, and traditionally, the Select Board has approved it this way by making it contingent upon receipt of the water test. We hold the permit at the Town Office until the results are received.
- P. Anderson stated that they are on a public drinking water system, so they are not responsible for drawing their own tests.
- S. Pendleton asked why the Big Island Grill is on today's list. P. Anderson explained that his water test results were missing at the last meeting, but now everything has been submitted.

MOTION BY H. Fields, seconded by D. Purington, to exit Public Hearing for Victualer Renewals. No discussion. Motion passed, 5 yes, 0 no. Unanimous.

MOTION BY S. Pendleton, seconded by H. Fields, to approve the Victualer Renewal for Big Island Grill as is, and the Tarratine Club application pending the completion of the water tests prior to June 22nd. No further discussion. Motion passed, 4 yes, 0 no. P. Anderson abstained.

FERRY SERVICE UPDATE

Peter Willcox reported that he sent the report of the most recent Ferry Service Advisory Board meeting.

SEA LEVEL RISE UPDATE

No update.

MUNICIPAL BUILDING PROJECT: UP-ISLAND PUBLIC SAFETY GARAGE, & PUBLIC SAFETY RENOVATION UPDATE

Public Safety Renovation: S. Pendleton reported that the wall has been opened up so there's an entry into the future kitchen area. The work is done based on rain days. We haven't had much work lately, but it's moving along.

Up-Island Public Safety Garage: S. Pendleton reported that work advancement has been slow. We have a meeting on Monday with the committee and the architects. The main thing we're trying to get done now is finish up the drywall. The contractor said it will be

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coming out in the next few days. The electrical needs to be brought in. The septic tank work is moving forward. It's a little broken up and slow. We have a date for the generator to arrive in the next few weeks, so we told them we have to have the electric on the building so CMP can connect that.

P. Anderson asked if we are exploring a clause for failure to provide services. S. Pendleton replied that there is a clause in the contract on performance, but there's no teeth to it.

Elana Kehoe asked why work is only done on rain days. S. Pendleton clarified that this is only for the Public Safety renovation. These two projects have two different contractors.

Julie Reidy asked if the garage doors for the Up-Island Public Safety Garage are available. S. Pendleton replied that they haven't been installed yet. There was discussion about the need for more light. There was going to be a change order to put windows on the side, but that would be expensive. The discussion on Monday was to not do that, but to change out the garage doors for ones that have windows in them.

Amy Mulnix stated that her understanding is that the Gallants are doing the renovation for the Public Safety area. She's wondering if we've anticipated that they've had tragedy, and what that might mean for the schedule for that project. S. Pendleton replied that this was not brought up in Monday's committee meeting.

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- Housing Committee: June 4th, 5:00pm.
- Islesboro Municipal Broadband: June 10th, 3:00pm.
- Sea Level Rise Committee: June 11th, 4:30pm.
- Planning Board: June 15th, 5:00pm.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

- Packet included Agenda for 6/3/26 and Minutes of 5/20/26 Select Board Regular Meeting.
- Committee Minutes
 - 4/7/26 Energy Committee minutes
 - 5/20/26 Health Center Advisory Board minutes
- Correspondence
 - 5/24/26 email from Attorney Kristin Collins re: Dylan Purington's election to the Select Board, and her suggestion to "move more formally toward the town manager form of government..." See email along with Title 30-A §2636, Powers and Duties of Town Manager.
- Handouts:
 - Spreadsheets on Town Meeting attendance 9/30/2014 – 5/16/2026.
 - June Public Works vacation schedules

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- Manager:
 - J. Anderson on vacation June 1 – 9.
 - Town Offices will be closed Friday, June 19th, in observance of Juneteenth.
- Warrant #25

Julie Reidy asked about the town manager form of government compared to what we're doing currently.

P. Anderson read a section of the attorney's email. It provides that Janet would appoint and oversee department heads and other officials rather than the Select Board doing so.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. Covered in Town Manager Report.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Sign Disbursement Warrant for Wages
2. Approval to Begin Ferry Ticket Program in June due to Donation
 - John King reported that he sent an email to EJ Dupont and Bill Geary at DOT, advising them of the passage of the warrant and giving them a heads-up.
 - The donation has been received. John met with Brian Bohanon.
 - John sent an email to EJ, saying that, pending Select Board approval, we would be prepared to buy approximately 300 vehicle tickets, 350 adult walk-ons, and 300 minor walk-ons, which will bring us very close to the \$25,000 donation.
 - John stated he spoke with Holly Fields, who advised on bulk tickets. If someone loses a ticket, the MSFS doesn't have a way to track it. Holly also stated that the ink on the tickets can fade in the sun. John revised the agreement to include this information. He sent a copy of the agreement to EJ Dupont and Joel Perry, the business manager in the Rockland MSFS office.
 - The revised agreement and overview drafts were circulated to the Select Board. There is also a draft of an announcement for Constant Contact. We could send that message out at the beginning of next week and post notices that we're ready to begin selling them on June 15th.
 - John stated that he will work with Brian to monitor the sales so we know what the demand is in three categories.
 - P. Anderson stated that the Board doesn't know anything about the donation, aside from the amount. He doesn't know if the Board would typically be given some level of information, such as how it originated, and the intention. He sticks firmly to his belief that we voted as a town on this program starting July 1st, and as such, we should not start it earlier with this money. We should

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use the funds do alleviate the cost to the taxpayers of the program. It seems like a dangerous precedent to vote on one thing, and then change it.

- P. Anderson asked John if the \$54,000 budget was for July through the end of peak season. John replied that it was for a four-month period, including June.
- P. Anderson asked if next year, if the \$54,000 program is put back to the voter, will it really be closer to \$70,000 or \$80,000 because of this donation?
- John King stated it depends on demand. There could be money left over. The limitation that we've placed on the tickets is our attempt to address what we think will be a reasonable program.
- P. Anderson stated that not having much information as a Board is frustrating. How can we vote to start this program based on a sum of money that we know nothing about?
- Daniel Frohling stated it's reasonable to want to know more about the donor. Perhaps that could be in Executive Session. The money is a gift. Unless the Board is going to go back to the Town and ask for a vote to start the program early, he doesn't know why there's a problem accepting it.
- P. Anderson clarified that he has no concern over who the donor is. He wants to know what the donation was destined for. To offset the cost in general, or to start the program early?
- S. Pendleton stated he has changed his opinion on this, based on some reflection and discussions. Now we have money that could be used to start the program early. He'd love for that to decrease the overall program cost, but the donation is there to start the program now. He agrees with Pete's concerns, but the goal is to help the islanders who need help. We can start that and it doesn't cost us anything. He will support that.
- Ted Pendleton stated the Town was going to check with the attorney about the legality of having already had the taxpayers vote on a particular amount of money, and then have more added to that. The question was raised at the last meeting about what would happen to any extra money that's not spent. Putting it in the General Fund is not good, optically and legally. He asked if we've heard back from the attorney.
- No one has seen anything from Janet or the attorney on this question.
- P. Rothschild stated that it seemed the will of the people at Town Meeting to provide relief from higher ferry rates. If someone steps up and wants to subsidize the time between mid-June and early July, providing it does not indicate that we're now going to increase the program cost next year, he doesn't have a problem with this. We're not undermining the will of the people by further subsidizing a program they already approved.

MOTION BY S. Pendleton, seconded by H. Fields, to approve spending of the anonymous funds and begin the program as soon as possible based on a positive response from the attorney. Discussion as below. Motion passed, 4 yes, 1 no (P. Anderson).

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- D. Purington stated that as long as the donation is not coming from a nefarious entity, and is not illegal, he doesn't think it's that big of a problem.
- Ted Pendleton reiterated that he has concerns about extra funds going into a General Fund, to then be used for any purpose. It's not fair to the taxpayer.
- Daniel Frohling stated the money could be rolled into the next year or brought back to the voters at next year's Town Meeting. There's no reason not to employ the \$25,000 this year.

The motion carried, with four yes votes and one no vote by P. Anderson

Additional comments:

- Kara Masters-Siekman read from her chat messages and stated that when you decline a generous donor you might lose them for life. She suggested a Special Town Meeting. This is an urgent opportunity. For her, the bigger problem is parking. It costs \$425 for a parking pass in Lincolnville, but they don't guarantee a space. This is an urgent difficulty for commuters.
- P. Rothschild stated that we are only discussing this one proposal to utilize this gift to diminish the impact of ferry tickets during the month of June.
- John King requested that someone from the Board contact the attorney. He is reasonably confident that we will get a green light. He will try to do this under the schedule that he proposed.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Discuss Establishing a Short-Term and Long-Term Community Goal to Make Islesboro an Attractive Community for Families.
 - S. Pendleton introduced his report. He researched island communities and what happens when schools close. The evidence is clear that if the school doesn't continue to be a vibrant aspect of the community, the island becomes a retirement community, and the economics go downhill.
 - S. Pendleton stated that he just wants to introduce the idea today. The ICC has a committee that is creating a five-year plan. Our different organizations and committees were built to provide a specific benefit to the town. We're at a tipping point and the need for all the committees to continue what they're doing well, but then to have a centralized goal to work towards is critical.
 - If we're able to express to Mainers that are not on the island that this is a place where you can have children grow up in a safe environment through high school, that's a powerful message.
 - If we come up with a big goal, it would include housing, the magnet program, the elementary, the preschool, etc. If we can have everybody incorporated whatever that message into their plan, would that allow us to be much more effective in the town? Two or three families make a difference.

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- P. Anderson stated he fails to see the need for this. Our Looking Ahead document pretty much says all this. He believes we already do that. These sorts of pushes seem like the indication or the concern is more for attracting new people than it is for sustaining the community we already have. He struggles with idea of marketing the island, when the reality is that it's difficult for working families to afford the price of things on the island. We need to focus on what we can do for the people who are here now. Apart from peace and quiet, we don't have a lot to make life attractive and sustainable for those of us who are already here, so that we're not losing folks. According to the Housing Committee surveys, people don't want to live here. When people ask about living on the island, he tells them not to come, because of the lack of housing, jobs, and resources.
- Daniel Frohling stated it's complex. Attracting people to the island is one of many topics. What Steve is proposing is an important part. He plans to come to the Board with a proposal that the Board take the 2018 Comprehensive Plan and convene a committee to do a jumpstart comprehensive plan for 2026, with the sustainability focus. The committee would come up with a recommendation for an action plan.
- Kate Misenheimer stated that it often feels like there's a lot of focus on bringing in new people, specifically families. She understands that the school is important for a community, but the island needs young people in general, not just families. It's off-putting that that most things are focused on families. Those who are single or childless have a lot of value. A community is made up of a lot of different ages.
- Ted Pendleton stated that we are focused so much on bringing in new people, that the cultural change has been dramatic. We do need some kind of guiding light to get behind, like bringing back the old plan, but making it digestible for people. He suggested we need to stop being negative. Language is important.
- P. Rothschild stated there's a proposal to continue this discussion at the next meeting. He referred to the school population dropping and the housing demand. The magnet program needs to be re-energized. These things are not mutually exclusive.
- D. Purington stated that if we work on ourselves, the island will become more attractive. People keep moving out here, and then it sucks, then they leave, and they sell their house for \$200,000 more or Airbnb it. That's not solvable by us. Some of it is bigger than us.
- Elana Kehoe stated we've been seeing the school population drop and talking about it for eight years. She added that single people cannot afford a house out here on their own. People need help now for places to stay this summer. Summer people buy houses and then they're off the market for anyone who might be able to afford it. Let's tax second and third homes. The year-round people deserve some relief.
- S. Pendleton stated he is pleased with the discussion. He feels the Islesboro Looking Ahead document is too broad. He hears the anxiousness of people

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talking. We have to narrow down what we can address, not what we can't address. His suggestion is to develop a primary goal that we all agree on and all committees are working towards. It's the responsibility of the Select Board to set a strategic direction. We have to listen and represent everyone. It's hard to hear two people on the Board say that living here sucks.

- Dan Tutor stated he's been listening and reporting on this for a while. We're looking for tangible, actionable solutions. Elana made a good point about taxing second and third homes. It raises revenue and also discourages people from buying up homes they don't need. However, there are currently legal obstacles to this approach. Working class wages haven't kept up with the cost of living. It's more acute here. Working as a town cooperatively to address that issue, addresses almost all the issues discussed.
 - P. Anderson clarified that he doesn't think the island sucks. He feels coming out here is not attainable or sustainable for many people, only for those who are living very comfortably. We have a lot of room for improvement. He agrees that as a Board, we need to get a grip on things. The first place to start is making sure what we vote on is what we do. He is happy to support anything that puts the Town first. The people who don't live here yet are not part of the Town.
 - Amy Mulnix stated that this is a difficult conversation, but it's also exciting to see so many people have such a passion for Islesboro, and to be thinking about how we're going to address our challenges. She thanked Steve for bringing this forward.
 - D. Purington clarified that he is also not saying Islesboro sucks. People move here without having the full picture of what they're getting into, and they end up leaving. If we develop what we have, that is better.
 - P. Rothschild stated IAP has built multi-family housing that is appropriate for single people. He would like the Town to support the development of more of that, and develop a diversity of housing.
2. Discuss Pay-for-Parking Spots at Grindle Point/Ferry Road around Watt's Corner.
- P. Rothschild stated that about a year ago, the Select Board asked him to study how to expand the parking on Ferry Road. The Board approved a tentative plan. We met with DOT, who controls the roadway, and developed a plan to add a significant number of parking spaces. We discussed having some reserved spaces for campers on Warren Island, and for islanders who need a place to park. Currently, the majority of the parking is by contractors based on the mainland, who are taking whatever costs they incur and charging their clients for it. We proposed a fee of \$300 for parking seasonally on Ferry Road, with a much lower fee for resident parking, coordinated with the parking that occurs at the ferry landing now. We are waiting for a refinement of the drawings, and putting this into the budget for paving this summer.

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- S. Pendleton stated that the budget is done. P. Rothschild clarified that there is an amount in the budget for general paving. It's not determined, and it's not clear what that covers. It could cover this.
- P. Rothschild added that there is the task of paving the area that is now dirt, and also the option to require permits for the spaces along the guardrail. The State has ceded that authority to us.
- We have an estimate of around \$50,000 to pave and stripe the dirt area. If we can't afford it this year, we will go into next year.
- S. Pendleton suggested that we can still set up parking there and charge for it.
- P. Rothschild stated that it needs to be stiped in order to charge a fee.
- Elana Kehoe asked if the resident parking would be guaranteed reserved spots or first-come. P. Rothschild replied that this hasn't been determined. Elana stated that if anyone is paying, they should get a reserved, guaranteed spot.
- P. Anderson stated it would be a worthwhile conversation to have as a Board regarding the selling of passes, and perhaps figure out a way to number spots when we stripe them. We should strive to be better than the DOT.
- Ted Pendleton asked if this is a done deal. P. Rothschild replied that the rate schedule and the question of numbering spaces is still up for discussion.
- Ted asked about the end goal. It wouldn't be a big source of revenue. We're paving paradise and fueling the engine that makes houses cost more.
- P. Rothschild stated the spirit of the initiative was not to generate vast amounts of revenue. The problem is that the demand exceeds the supply in Lincolnville, and contractors are parking over here for free.
- S. Pendleton added that people were parking on private property, all over the place, and illegally. The idea was to expand the amount of parking.
- Discussion about some of the pros and cons.
- P. Anderson added that the property owner had put the property on the market and approached the Town to discuss whether we'd be interested in purchasing it. It was a prohibitive price, but this was a good compromise to reach, in cooperation with DOT, to ensure a way for us to retain parking availability in that area, in the case of a new owner creating obstacles. This was our solution to retain parking and then to offset the cost of construction by charging fees, in a similar format to what we already do.
- Kara Masters-Siekman stated we need to look at macroeconomics. We keep going over micro issues. That parking lot is going to be under water in a few years. We should have bought high ground that was on the corner. Other towns in our area are increasing their emergency operations funds. Everyone will be trapped when we can't get off island. Kara stated she can't find the plan. We keep dumping money into putting fill at the Narrows that gets washed away. We can't waste time with what you are talking about.
- P. Rothschild stated we have a Sea Level Rise Committee that has worked for months trying to get grants to address the problem at the Narrows in a durable way. It's very expensive, but we are working on that. That committee is

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really embracing the larger issue of how we make Islesboro sustainable in the face of sea-level rise and climate change.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. None

APPROVE WARRANT: FY26 #25

MOTION BY P. Anderson, seconded by S. Pendleton, to approve Warrant FY26 #25. No discussion. Motion passed, 5 yes, 0 no. Unanimous.

MOTION BY P. Anderson, seconded by H. Fields, to approve Wage Warrant. No discussion. Motion passed, 5 yes, 0 no. Unanimous.

APPOINTMENTS:

1. None

CHAIR COMMENTS

P. Rothschild: No comments.

VICE-CHAIR COMMENTS

P. Anderson: Given everything I've said about attracting new people to the island and affordability and such, I would like to clarify that my vocalized opinions are my own and not reflective of my employer.

INDIVIDUAL SELECT BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

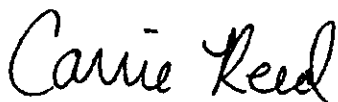
D. Purington: No comments.

H. Fields: No comments.

S. Pendleton: Welcome to the new members. I appreciate everybody participating in these meetings, because that's what it's about. It's going to be a little rough here for a while, but having this type of dialogue is critical for our future.

MOTION BY H. Field, seconded by D. Purington to adjourn meeting at 7:25 PM. No discussion. Motion passed, 5 yes, 0 no. Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,



Carrie Reed
Secretary

OLD



Data Supporting the Reason for Select Board Action

The greatest threat to Islesboro is not any single issue. It is the cumulative effect of year-round demographic aging, expensive ferry fares, housing constraints, and other factors. The solution is to agree on a unified vision, then incorporate the goal into each committee and organization's charter, leveraging their combined power to ensure our island remains a vibrant, growing, year-round community for generations to come.

Potential Tagline:

More Families. More Opportunity. More Islesboro

Should the Select Board Develop the Goal?

Should committees include this goal in their charter?

- School & Magnet Program = attracts families
- Housing = enables families
- Broadband = supports opportunity
- Ferry = supports opportunity
- Health Center = supports families
- Recreation = improves quality of life
- Community Center = Improves quality of life

Island and Coastal Community School's Impact on Sustainability

In Maine's island communities, the local school is often far more than an educational institution. It is frequently the anchor that determines whether young families stay, whether businesses can recruit workers, and whether a year-round community survives.

While relatively few Maine islands have lost their schools entirely, extensive research shows that when a school closes, the economic and demographic consequences are significant.

Why Schools Matter So Much on Maine Islands

Maine has 15 year-round unbridged island communities with a combined population of only about 4,400 residents. Many already face:

- Aging populations
- Declining school enrolment
- Limited employment opportunities
- High housing costs
- Dependence on fishing and seasonal tourism

On small islands, even the loss of a handful of school-age children can trigger a downward spiral:

1. School enrolment declines.
2. Families leave or stop moving to the island.
3. School closure becomes likely.
4. Young families avoid relocating there.
5. Housing converts to seasonal use.
6. Workforce shortages worsen.
7. Businesses struggle to survive.

Population Statistics Showing the Challenge

Several island communities have experienced substantial population decline:

Island	Population Change (2010-2020)
Frenchboro	-50%+ (61 residents to fewer than 30)
Matinicus	-28% (loss of 21 residents)
Monhegan	-7%
North Haven	+17.5%
Chebeague	+16%
Islesboro	+3%

The communities showing growth generally maintained strong schools and year-round family populations.

Economic Impact of School Closure Research

A doctoral study at the University of Southern Maine examined rural Maine communities following school closures and found measurable impacts on community economic health indicators. The study specifically investigated changes in:

- Property values
- Business activity
- Civic participation
- Population stability
- Community attractiveness to new residents
- Local economic vitality

The research concluded that schools serve as a critical economic asset in rural communities, not merely an educational service.

National research on rural school closures similarly found:

- Declining property values
- Reduced business activity
- Lower civic engagement
- Difficulty attracting employers and workers

Real Examples from Maine Islands

Monhegan

The school had only seven students in 2005, yet the community continued to support it because residents viewed it as essential to maintaining a year-round population. High school students must already attend the mainland.

Matinicus

Population losses have created recurring concerns about maintaining enough children to support educational services and long-term community viability. The population declined by more than one-quarter during the last decade.

The Most Important Statistic

Island development organizations such as the Island Institute often refer to schools as one of the primary indicators of community sustainability. Across Maine's islands, maintaining a viable school is viewed as synonymous with maintaining a viable year-round community. Once a school closes, attracting young families becomes dramatically harder, which accelerates demographic and economic decline.

Relevance to Islesboro

For a community like Islesboro, the school is arguably one of the most important economic development assets on the island. Its continued operation helps:

- Retain young families
- Support year-round housing demand
- Attract teachers and professionals
- Sustain volunteer fire, EMS, and civic organizations
- Preserve local businesses
- Maintain property values

Many Maine island leaders would argue that once an island loses its school, it begins to transition from a living, year-round community to a seasonal one, making school preservation one of the most important long-term economic strategies available.

Examples of coastal towns where school closures directly preceded population decline and economic contraction

1. Criehaven (Ragged Island), Maine

Criehaven was once a year-round fishing community. As the population declined, the school eventually closed in 1941. Following the closure, the island rapidly lost additional year-round families, then its general store and post office. Today, it exists primarily as a seasonal community with little permanent population. Historians note that family departures accelerated after the school closed.

2. Monhegan Island, Maine

Monhegan nearly lost its school multiple times due to declining enrolments. Island leaders repeatedly describe the school as essential to the community.

A history of Maine island schools, published by the Island Institute, notes that island residents widely recognize that the closure of an island school "portends the eventual end of a year-round community's sustainability." This statement emerged from concerns over Monhegan's school enrolment falling to critically low levels.

The community has invested heavily in keeping young families on the island because losing even one or two families can threaten school viability.

3. Cliff Island, Maine

Cliff Island's school remains open today, but ongoing debates over its possible closure illustrate why island residents fight so hard to preserve it. Residents argued that eliminating the school would make it significantly harder to attract and retain young families. The school population is expected to grow, and advocates contend that the island's long-term viability depends on maintaining local educational services.

4. Islesboro, Maine (The Positive Example)

Islesboro is often cited as the opposite outcome.

Rather than allowing enrolment to decline unchecked, the community developed innovative approaches, including a magnet program that brings mainland students to the island. The result is a school that remains a major attraction for families and an important contributor to year-round community stability. Many island development experts point to Islesboro as evidence that investing in schools can help preserve a working, year-round island economy.

5. Danforth, Maine (Rural Coastal Region Lesson)

Although not an island, Danforth provides one of Maine's best-documented economic analyses.

A study found that closure of the local K-12 school would eliminate 43 jobs in a town where the school was the second-largest employer. Researchers concluded that the school served not only an educational function but also as an economic engine and community hub. They projected that families and employees would relocate if the school closed. This finding is especially relevant to islands, where alternative schools are even farther away and relocation pressures are stronger.

Broader New England Trend

The Federal Reserve Bank of Boston found that every county in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont experienced declines in the school-age population between 2000 and 2017, and that 14% of Northern New England schools open in 2000 have since closed.

The report specifically links declining enrolment, school closures, and long-term sustainability challenges facing rural communities.

A Powerful Statistic

Among Maine's year-round islands, a movement of only one or two families can determine whether a school survives. Island education leaders frequently note that the school is often the first institution at risk and the last line of defense against becoming primarily a seasonal community.

Conclusion

When a community loses its school, it does not immediately lose its future. But it becomes dramatically harder to attract young families, recruit workers, sustain businesses, maintain volunteer organizations, and preserve a year-round economy. The history of Maine islands suggests that schools are not merely educational assets; they are among the most important economic development assets a community possesses.

For Islesboro specifically, I suggest the school is as important to long-term economic sustainability as ferry service, broadband, affordable housing, and healthcare access.

***The communities that preserved all of those elements generally remained viable.
The communities that lost them struggled to maintain year-round populations.***

Submitted by Steve Pendleton
6/1/2026

Janet Anderson

NEW

From: Mandy Holway <Mandy@olverassociatesinc.com>
It: Monday, June 8, 2026 9:08 AM
To: Janet Anderson; 'Craig Olson'
Cc: Bill Olver
Subject: FW: FFY 2026 Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) Proposed Project Funding List and Applicant Funding Agreements
Attachments: 1 Agreement to Comply 2026 Requirements - Coverletter.pdf; DRAFT PPL 2026.pdf; Islesboro Agreement To Comply 2026 Requirements - Affordability-FSP.pdf
Importance: High

Good morning Janet & Craig-

The attached information is the response from Maine DEP regarding the Town's application for funding assistance for the Dark Harbor sewer improvements, and it is good news! They are offering the town a total of \$3,810,000 of funding consisting of a low interest loan of \$ 2,810,000 plus \$1,000,000 which is all going to be forgiven, which is CWSRF terminology for a grant. That \$3,810,000 could fund the project if favorable contractor bids are received. The \$1M is the maximum amount DEP is able to award each applicant, so this is a good offer from them.

The Town still has an application still pending for Congressional Designated Spending for \$1,800,000. Senator King has included it on his list for consideration. If that grant makes it through the Congressional budgeting process, then the Town could accept the DEP's \$1,000,000 grant, and just the \$800,000 portion of the loan needed to complete the project budget. The Congressional budget won't be acted on likely until fall, and as you know the last few years they have not been able to pass this without continuing resolutions, so we won't know about that funding until a federal budget is passed if the Town's funding request makes it that far.

As for action at this time, the Town needs to reply to the DEP by July 10th as to whether you intend to accept the funding or not. This is not binding however until the loan commitment is completed which has to happen by September 30, 2027. We recommend that the Town accept the funding as offered and if there is an offer from CDS that displaces some of the loan, you can notify the DEP of this later. In this scenario, the project is funded fully with a combination of grant and low interest loan. If you do not receive the CDS grant, or decide that the Town cannot afford to take the loan, then you would not proceed with the bond bank commitment.

Please let us know if you have questions, or would like to discuss this further.

Mandy

MANDY J. HOLWAY, P.E. (ME, MA)
OLVER ASSOCIATES INC.
P. O. BOX 679
290 S MAIN STREET
WINTERPORT, MAINE 04496
(207)223-2232
(207)949-4680 CELL

From: DEP, Maine.CWSRF.Grants <Maine.CWSRF.Grants@maine.gov>

Sent: Saturday, June 6, 2026 6:04 PM

To: Janet Anderson (manager@townofislesboro.com) <manager@townofislesboro.com>
Cc: Mandy Holway <Mandy@olverassociatesinc.com>; Clark, Camden T <Camden.T.Clark@maine.gov>
Subject: FFY 2026 Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) Proposed Project Funding List and Applicant Funding Agreements
Importance: High

SOMplaintext

TO: Municipal & Districts Officials that Applied for FFY 2026 CWSRF Project Funding
FROM: Brandy King, P.Eng., P.E., CWSRF Program Manager
 Clean Water State Revolving Fund, Bureau of Water Quality
SUBJECT: FFY 2026 Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) Proposed Project Funding List and Applicant Funding Agreements

The Department has completed its ranking of the projects that were submitted for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2026 CWSRF funding. FFY 2026 CWSRF Base program allows additional subsidies to be offered in the form of Principle Forgiveness (PF) as well as funds from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) in Supplemental and Emerging Contaminant funding, all to be directed towards wastewater infrastructure projects.

The CWSRF Base and BIL capitalization grant allotments, plus Repayments and State Match equate to the estimated:

FFY 2026 Funds	Total Amount	Principal Forgiveness
CWSRF – Base	\$5,207,984	\$1,384,350
CWSRF – BIL Supp.	\$19,069,000	\$9,343,810
CWSRF – EC	\$1,580,160	\$1,580,160
CWSRF – Repayments*	\$52,117,082	\$0
CWSRF – State Match	\$4,919,630	\$0
Total	\$82,893,856	\$12,308,320

**Repayment funds are estimated*

Subsidy is offered as loan principal forgiveness in the listed categories: Affordability, Fiscal Sustainability Planning, Climate Adaptation Planning, Emerging Contaminant, and Stormwater planning projects. Capital projects were prioritized by environmental benefit, and the principal forgiveness was offered in order of the highest environmental benefit ranking to the lowest. Fiscal Sustainability Planning and Climate Adaptation Planning projects' principal forgiveness for standalone loans are offered in order of highest affordability point ranking to lowest. Subsidy for Stormwater planning projects was completed separately from Wastewater with a different ranking system.

The CWSRF program continues to grow from annual inputs of capitalization grants, state match, repayments, and BIL. We are able to fund roughly \$83M in projects. This year's requests were for 54 projects (45 Infrastructure, 1 Standalone FSP or CAP, 7 EC, and 1 Stormwater and Nonpoint Source) from applicants,

totaling **\$417M**. The submitted projects were prioritized based not only on their environmental importance, but also on project timing. We are currently looking at how we can bridge the funding gap and prudently finance as many of these environmentally important projects as we can. For example, ranking thresholds are lowered for BIL funding so that we might assist as many communities as possible with those monies.

Attached are the following supporting documents:

- *DRAFT FFY 2026 CWSRF Project Priority List*

The documents contain a ranking of the projects and the amount of loan and/or principal forgiveness that is being offered to the applicants for affordability, fiscal sustainability plans, climate adaptation plans, green project reserve, emerging contaminants, and stormwater or nonpoint source.

In order for the Department to receive the FFY 2026 CWSRF Capitalization Grants, the Intended Use Plan (IUP) must be posted for public review and comment on [our website](#). The IUP cannot be finalized until it has gone through a public review and comment period, and the entities have all responded to the offers as to their intentions on accepting the CWSRF financing, principal forgiveness, and conditions.

The Department is requesting that you review the funding package amounts offered for the submitted project(s). If the Department was able to offer principal forgiveness funds, please complete the attached "Applicant Agreement to Comply with FFY 2026 Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) Requirements ..." form. These forms are attached and have been customized to submitted project(s) and the principal forgiveness being offered. Applicants that did not receive funds because we ran out of PF and/or loans before reaching the submitted project(s) could still potentially benefit if funds become available.

The State will be making a public announcement of the offers once everyone has responded to the applicant agreements. The deadline for submission of the Applicant Agreement(s), one for each project, is **5:00 pm, Friday, July 10th, 2026**. Please e-mail the form to Maine.CWSRF.Grants@maine.gov. If there are any comments or questions, please email the SRF team at the above address.

Sincerely,

Brandy M. P. King

Brandy King, P. Eng., P.E.
Environmental Engineering Services Manager
Bureau of Water Quality Management
Maine Department of Environmental Protection
TEL: (207) 242-6149, FAX: (207) 287-3534
www.maine.gov/dep



JANET, T. MILLS
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



MELANIE LOYZIM
COMMISSIONER

**APPLICANT AGREEMENT TO COMPLY WITH
FFY 2026 CLEAN WATER STATE REVOLVING FUND (CWSRF) REQUIREMENTS
(Affordability and Fiscal Sustainability Plan Principal Forgiveness Form)**

Applicant: Town of Islesboro
Project Name: Dark Harbor Wastewater System Improvements
Contact: Janet Anderson, Town Manager

The Affordability Principal Forgiveness we are offering is identified in the table entitled "DRAFT FFY 2026 CWSRF Project Priority List (PPL)" and detailed below. Your Affordability Principal Forgiveness Ratio is 100%. That means we can offer Affordability Principal Forgiveness (PF) in the amount of \$995,000. We are also able to offer you up to \$5,000 in PF for a Fiscal Sustainability Plan (FSP).

The Department is offering the following funding package for this project, subject to available CWSRF funding and loan approval by the Maine Municipal Bond Bank. For this year, the Department has limited each applicant to a total award from any source of \$10,000,000 with a maximum of \$1,000,000 in PF:

Total Assistance Provided	\$3,810,000
BIL Affordability PF	(\$995,000)
FSP PF	(\$5,000)
CWSRF Loan Payback Amount	\$2,810,000

Please keep in mind that this offer is based on the information submitted in your request for funding and is subject to change if you receive additional funding from another source or agency or reduce the estimated CWSRF borrowing. If either of these occur, that information will be used to revise your CWSRF User Rate Calculator and your Affordability Principal Forgiveness Ratio, which could result in an adjustment to the Affordability Principal Forgiveness offered.

Please let us know of your intent by checking the appropriate box below. Thank you for your assistance.

**Capital Project with Affordability and Fiscal Sustainability Principal Forgiveness.
(check one)**

- We agree to **accept** assistance for the project listed above and identified in the table entitled "DRAFT FFY 2026 CWSRF Project Priority List (PPL)" and to enter into a binding loan commitment with the Maine Municipal Bond Bank for this project by **September 30, 2027**. We agree to certify that we have implemented a fiscal sustainability plan in accordance with the Department's *Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) Requirements and Guidance for a Fiscal Sustainability Plan (FSP)*, and to certify that the project meets the *Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) Cost and Effectiveness Analysis Requirements and Guidance*. To review these documents or obtain more detailed guidance on CWSRF requirements please visit the [CWSRF website](#).
- To receive up to \$50,000 in Fiscal Sustainability Plan Principal Forgiveness, we also agree to complete the plan in accordance with the guidance on the [CWSRF website](#).

OR

- We choose **not to accept** funding for the project listed above and identified in the table entitled "DRAFT FFY 2026 CWSRF Project Priority List (PPL)."

Authorized Representative Name: _____ Title: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please submit the Applicant Intent to Apply form by 5:00 pm, Friday, July 10th, 2026. Please e-mail the form to Maine.CWSRF.Grants@maine.gov. If there are any comments or questions, please email the SRF team at the above address.

NEW

SUMMER INFORMATIONAL MEETING



Photo by Rachel Rolerson-Smith

**THURSDAY
JULY 30, 2026
G.H.K. Center
5:30PM**

Updates on:

- **Sea Level Rise**
- **Municipal Building Projects**
- **Ferry**
- **School**
- _____

NEW

Janet Anderson

From: James Kossuth <administrator@northportmaine.org>
Sent: Friday, June 12, 2026 1:12 PM
To: Janet Anderson
Subject: MMA Legislative Policy Committee

Hi Janet,

Northport received its ballot today for the next Legislative Policy Committee, and the exciting thing for democracy is that there are three people running for two slots! I'm writing to ask Islesboro to vote for me with one of its two votes.

I am running for a third term on the MMA LPC, where I will continue to advocate for local control of land use and regulation, and to fight against needless state intrusion in local government. The variety of my professional experience -- including five years writing dictionary definitions and seven years as a lawyer -- give me a unique insight into the proper approach to drafting legislative solutions, and will serve the district well in the next legislative session.

Thank you!
James.

James Kossuth
Northport Town Administrator
16 Beech Hill Road
Northport, ME 04849
207-338-3819 ext 6
207-338-3596 fax
administrator@northportmaine.org
www.northportmaine.org

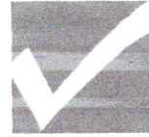
GENERAL EMAIL NOTICE: Under Maine's Freedom of Access Law (also known as "Right to Know"), documents in the possession of public officials about town business are classified as public records. This includes email. Therefore, if anyone requests to see it in writing, we are required to provide it to them. There are very few exceptions to this. The Town of Northport welcomes feedback and questions from our residents, but please keep in mind that it may be shared as it is a public document.



MAINE MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION SINCE 1936

60 Community Drive | Augusta, ME 04330-9486
1-800-452-8786 (in state) | (t) 207-623-8428
(f) 207-624-0129

To: Key Municipal Officials of MMA's Member Municipalities
From: Justin Poirier, President, Maine Municipal Association
Date: June 8, 2026
Re: Ballot for Election to MMA's Legislative Policy Committee



MMA's member municipalities have made their nominations for the 2026-2028 Legislative Policy Committee (LPC). It is now time to elect your representatives to serve on the committee. The enclosed election ballot must be completed by the Selectboard or Town/City Council of your municipality.

Number of votes

Most municipalities are being asked to vote for two candidates, because there are two elected LPC members for most districts. Some municipalities only vote for one candidate, because the other LPC member in that district is appointed. ***You are instructed on the ballot (above the list of candidates) whether to vote for two candidates or just one.***

Candidate profiles

If you are not familiar with any of the candidates, please review the Candidate Profiles on the back of the ballot. Also, feel free to contact the candidates directly.

Write-in candidates

In addition to the candidates listed on the ballot, you may vote for a candidate whose name is not on the ballot by writing that person's name in. The write-in candidate need not be from your municipality but must be an elected or appointed official from an MMA member municipality in your Senate/LPC District. ***Check to be sure the write-in candidate is willing to serve if elected!*** Write-in candidates should be communicating their interest in serving among the municipal officers within their district.

If you are instructed to vote for two candidates and only one candidate is on the ballot, please use the "write-in" line for your second vote if you know of someone who is willing to serve.

Deadline for returning ballot

Please return the ballot by 5:00 p.m. on **Monday, July 27, 2026** to Laura Ellis, either in the enclosed envelope or via email (lellis@memun.org).


Your participation is important – thank you!

OFFICIAL BALLOT – District 11

Maine Municipal Association's Legislative Policy Committee
July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2028


VOTE FOR TWO:

- James Kossuth, Administrator, Town of Northport
- Char-lin Williams, Town Clerk, Town of Unity
- Angela Cilley, Town Clerk, Town of Searsmont

_____ (name) _____ (position) _____ (municipality)  write in)

Candidate Profiles Are On Reverse Side

MUNICIPALITY: Islesboro DATE: 6/17/2026

 **BY SELECTMEN/COUNCILORS:**

_____ signature

_____ print name

_____ signature

_____ print name

_____ signature

_____ print name

_____ signature

_____ print name

_____ signature

_____ print name

Return by 5:00 p.m., July 27, 2026 to:

Laura Ellis, Maine Municipal Association
lellis@memun.org

LPC Senate District 11

Belfast
Belmont
Brooks
Burnham
Frankfort
Freedom
Giesboro
Jackson
Knox

Liberty
Lincolntonville
Monroe
Montville
Morrill
Northport
Palermo
Prospect
Searsmont

Searsport
Stockton Springs
Swanville
Thorndike
Troy
Unity
Waldo
Winterport

26

Candidate Profile:

James Kossuth has served as Administrator of the Town of Northport for four years. Prior municipal experience includes serving as chair of the Historical Commission in Medford, MA. James has served as a member of the Northport Volunteer Fire Department and has also worked as an academic administrator, career counselor, editor and lawyer. He has served on the LPC since 2022 and would like to continue to advocate for local control of land use regulation and to fight against needless state intrusion in local government, and to help shape legislative developments, with an eye toward protecting the interests of the district.

Char-lin Williams has served as the Town Clerk in the Town of Unity for two and a half years. She has been in municipal government since 2015, having served as town clerk, administrative assistant, and interim town manager over the years in another community. She has a degree in Environmental and Real Estate Law where she discovered her love of reading, interpreting and understanding laws and legislation. Char-lin served on the Legislative Policy Committee this past term, enjoyed advocating for the towns in Senate District 11, and would like to continue her service. She feels that with her experience on the LPC, as well as her understanding of how different legislation can impact local municipalities, she can advocate for the district on future legislative policy by bringing local perspectives that sometimes get missed in Augusta.

Angela Cilley has served the Town of Searsmont as Town Clerk, Tax Collector and Registrar of Voters for the past year and a half. She would like to serve on the LPC to help ease pressure on the property taxpayers, perhaps through strengthening the state-municipal partnership. Angela is also concerned with the growing demands on town clerks, particularly around elections and election law.