

SELECT BOARD MEETING

TOWN OFFICE at 5:30PM 6PM

Wednesday, September 9, 2026

Revised: 9/8/26

PUBLIC INFO MEETING: 5pm on 9/16/26 Special Town Meeting Articles

<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 August 26, 2026 Regular Meeting Accept Minutes of the September 2, 2026 Special Meeting	
3.	Visitor's Comments/Petitions: ○ Citizen Request for Pendleton Point Road Survey to Lower Speed Limit. Rec'd 9/2/26	• Ferry Service Update • Sea Level Rise Update • Update on Up Island Public Safety Garage • Update on Public Safety Renovations
4.	Upcoming Meetings and Subcommittee Reports: • Planning Board: September 14, 2026 • Special Town Meeting: Wednesday, September 16, 2026 at 6pm GHK Center. •	
5.	Town Manager Report:	Correspondence: 9/8 Letter from Jennifer and Philippe Selendy RE: Study of Tick-Borne Illnesses
6.	<u>Old Business:</u> 1. Look into Forming a Fire Risk Committee to Evaluate Fire Risks in town and Evaluate a Course of Action. 2. Rod Pendleton will Talk about Groundwater Conditions on Islesboro.	
7.	<u>New Business:</u> 1	
8.	<u>Other Business:</u> 1.	
9.	Approve Warrant: FY27 - #6	
10.	Appointments:	
11.	Chair Comments:	Individual Selectmen's Comments:
12.		
13.	Adjourn	

W: SB AGENDA 9 9 2026

MEMBERS:

Peter Anderson
2028

Stephen Pendleton
2027

Peter Rothschild
2028

VACANT
2029

Dylan Purington
2029

Islesboro Select Board
Special Meeting
Town Office Meeting Room & via Zoom
Wednesday, September 2, 2026 @ 4:30 PM

DRAFT MINUTES

Members Present:

Chair Peter Rothschild, Vice Chair Peter Anderson, Stephen Pendleton

Members Absent:

Dylan Purington

Others Present:

Town Manager Janet Anderson, Nancy Alexander

Others Present via Zoom:

Donna Leone, Bob Kochan

Call to Order: Chair Peter Rothschild called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM, and a quorum was established.

SIGN REVISED SPECIAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT FOR SEPTEMBER 16, 2026

Revisions:

1. Add Time (6:00pm) to front page.
2. Amend language in Articles 4 & 5 to include: "To see if the Town will either authorize or not authorize the granting of the described easement."

P. Anderson: "I would like it on record that while I voted in favor of the language of this warrant, as I will never use my role here to stand in the way of the will of the people, I believe this action, notably Article 6, made in response to rumors and speculation, sets a very bad precedent for the future efficacy of this board and its relationship with the community.

We are elected by this community to represent it and act in its best interest, something we were attempting to do by trying to convene a NEW group of people to discuss an ongoing danger to the general wellbeing of our community as a whole. This petition, and remarks made by community members both in public at meetings such as this and on social media, have led me to believe that we, or some of us, have lost that trust.

Turning a blind eye to a major public health risk because what happened in the past is painful to talk about is silly enough, but to kneecap the selectboard like this to prevent us from so much as TALKING about an issue is unacceptable.

Islesboro Select Board
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While I'm willing to have the tough, necessary conversations about how to keep our community safe and healthy, I'm starting to wonder if maybe that's not what's wanted of myself or us as a board.

I see the precedent that passage of this article will set as being so potentially detrimental, that if it passes, I fail to see myself being able to fulfill my obligations as an elected official. Thank you."

S. Pendleton: "That was exceptionally well stated. I am in complete agreement with the point that we were elected to represent best interests. The lack of the ability to have a conversation regarding a topic is what Pete has already stated."

P. Rothschild: "I agree also. I do think it is important to note, number one, I had several discussions with the town attorney about this, and I still am of the impression that it violates the U.S. Constitution and probably two laws in the State of Maine to prevent anybody who wants to congregate and study anything they want to. Number two, I think the part that absolutely did touch me is the sense of "them and us," and any implication that the Select Board is somehow trying to go against the will of the majority, because I very much feel, as Pete so eloquently described, the only reason I'm here is to serve the community, and if the community sees me as the enemy, my future role here is jeopardized.

I also would very modestly add that I don't think this prevents the Select Board from having a discussion about this, if it were to pass. I feel like the whole thing was emotional and blown out of proportion. We could have preempted all this by appointing a committee, and, according to Kristin Collins, they can't undo that by this warrant. It was needlessly confrontational."

MOTION BY P. Anderson, seconded by S. Pendleton, to approve revised Warrant. No further discussion. Motion passed, 3 yes, 0 no. Unanimous.

MOTION BY P. Anderson, seconded by S. Pendleton, to adjourn meeting at 4:39 PM. No discussion. Motion passed, 3 yes, 0 no. Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carrie Reed
Secretary

Philippe & Jennifer Selendy

562 Main Road

Islesboro



Mr. Owen Howell PA-C

Health Officer

Islesboro Health Center

150 Main Road

Islesboro, ME 04848

Re: Study of Tick-borne Illnesses Pursuant to 22 M.R.S. § 454-A.

Dear Owen:

We are writing to ask you, in your capacity as Islesboro's Local Health Officer, to undertake a formal review of the continuing threat posed to Islesboro residents by Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses and to recommend appropriate actions to the Town.

As you are likely aware, this is not a new issue for Islesboro. We understand that, beginning in 2008, after a substantial increase in diagnosed Lyme disease cases, the Town undertook an extensive effort to understand and address tick-borne disease. It commissioned deer and tick surveys, established a Tick-Borne Disease Prevention Committee and Deer Reduction Committee, consulted outside experts and state officials, and implemented special deer hunts. The Town's 2011 Tick-Borne Disease Prevention Committee ultimately recommended an integrated prevention program involving personal protection, pesticide use, landscape management, and wildlife management, including reducing the deer population toward 10 deer per square mile.

Much of that work, however, is now more than a decade old. Tick-borne disease remains a serious public-health issue in Maine and may be a "public health threat" under Maine law. Today, there is considerably more epidemiological and scientific evidence concerning Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses and the effectiveness of different interventions.

We therefore believe it is appropriate for Islesboro to revisit this issue as a public health question, using current data and the best available science.

Maine law gives the Local Health Officer an important role in doing so. Under 22 M.R.S. § 454-A, a Local Health Officer must (is legally obligated to) receive and examine complaints concerning conditions posing a "public health threat or a potential public health threat," report required information concerning communicable diseases, serve as a connection between

residents and Maine CDC resources, and, after consultation with the Commissioner or the Commissioner's designee, has broad authority concerning the suppression and removal of conditions suspected or found to pose a public-health threat.

Accordingly, we respectfully ask that you consider taking the following steps:

1. Open a formal Local Health Officer review.

Please treat this letter as a request that you examine, pursuant to 22 M.R.S. § 454-A(2)(D), whether the incidence of tick-borne disease and the ecological conditions contributing to human exposure to infected ticks on Islesboro constitute a public-health threat or potential public-health threat.

We understand that there is currently political opposition to the formation of a committee by the Select Board to consider this issue. However, a committee is entirely unnecessary given that Maine law requires the Town's public health officer to examine potential threats to public health at the request of any citizen.

We are not asking you to prejudge that question. We are asking that it be examined objectively, using current evidence.

2. Determine the current burden of tick-borne disease on Islesboro.

Working with Maine CDC and the Islesboro Health Center, to the extent permitted by applicable privacy laws, please determine what reliable information is available concerning the incidence of Lyme disease, anaplasmosis, babesiosis, *Borrelia miyamotoi* disease, Powassan virus disease, and other tick-borne illnesses among Islesboro residents.

Where possible, we ask that the analysis compare Islesboro's disease incidence with statewide rates and with other reasonably comparable Maine communities.

3. Obtain current ecological data.

The Town previously collected valuable information concerning both deer density and tick abundance and infection rates. Please consider recommending that the Town obtain updated scientifically valid measurements of:

- deer density on Islesboro and 700 Acre Island;
- deer-tick density;
- the percentage of sampled ticks carrying relevant pathogens; and
- changes in these measurements compared with the Town's historical data.

This would allow the community to make decisions based on the conditions that exist today rather than estimates that may be a decade or more old.

4. Request formal assistance from Maine CDC.

Section 454-A specifically contemplates a relationship between Local Health Officers and Maine CDC. We therefore ask that you contact Maine CDC and request its assistance in evaluating the Islesboro situation.

Among other things, we would ask Maine CDC for its assessment of the severity of Islesboro's tick-borne-disease burden, the data that should be collected, and the interventions supported by current public-health evidence.

If possible, we request that you also ask Maine CDC to designate an epidemiologist or other appropriate professional to participate in the Town's review.

5. Seek input from Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife.

Because deer and other wildlife management is ultimately a matter involving state wildlife authority, please ask Maine IF&W to participate as well.

In particular, we believe it would be useful to ask IF&W to provide current information concerning Islesboro's deer population and to identify the wildlife-management tools that are presently available to the Town if the scientific evidence demonstrates that reducing deer density would materially reduce the risk of tick-borne disease.

The Town's prior experience is relevant here. Islesboro previously attempted special hunts to reduce the deer population, and IF&W ultimately concluded that continuation of the particular special-hunt approach then proposed would not be effective. If the deer population remains substantially above the level previously recommended and continues to contribute materially to the public-health problem, the Town should understand what measures IF&W believes *would* be effective.

We believe the involvement of IF&W is also important due to the impact of the deer on the local environment and the experience that some islanders witnessed last winter; namely, deer starving and drowning/dying and washing up on our shores.

6. Obtain independent scientific advice.

We also ask that you recommend that the Town consult one or more independent scientists with recognized expertise in the ecology and epidemiology of black-legged ticks, deer populations (or other local wildlife), and human tick-borne disease.

We believe that the scientifically relevant questions are: what role does deer density play in maintaining adult tick populations; under what ecological circumstances does reducing deer density reduce tick abundance; what level of reduction is necessary to produce a meaningful effect; and, most importantly, what interventions have been demonstrated to reduce human exposure or disease?

The Town should seek scientists who can answer those questions objectively, including scientists whose work may point toward different conclusions. There are ample precedents for doing so:

We request that you consider whether Islesboro can establish a formal research partnership modeled on prior work conducted on Monhegan, Swan's Island, and several other Maine offshore islands. Maine researchers have previously conducted longitudinal tick sampling, pathogen testing, deer-density estimation and evaluation of deer-reduction programs on Maine islands. To leverage existing work, Islesboro should determine whether Maine CDC, the University of Maine Tick Lab, MaineHealth researchers, Maine IF&W, or other appropriate institutions would partner with the Town to establish a scientifically rigorous current study of conditions on Islesboro.

Another logical partner may be the University of Maine Cooperative Extension Tick Lab. It conducts applied tick research in Maine, provides tick diagnostics and public outreach, and expressly directs people to available Maine CDC resources as part of its work.

The critical scientific advantage to scientists who study tick-borne disease in Maine is that Islesboro already possesses historical baseline data. A modern study wouldn't begin at Year 0. Researchers could compare current results with the Town's earlier deer surveys, tick surveys, disease experience and deer-reduction efforts.

That potentially makes Islesboro scientifically interesting beyond its own municipal problem: it could become a contemporary test of whether sustained deer reduction on a relatively large, inhabited Maine island produces measurable reductions in infected nymphal ticks and ultimately human disease.

That is a much more compelling proposition to take to Maine CDC, UMaine and potential research funders than simply saying that Islesboro wants help with its tick problem.

7. Evaluate all reasonable interventions, not merely deer reduction.

Current town debates seem to focus almost exclusively on deer, which are but one important focus. We ask that the review consider the full range of potentially effective interventions, including personal protective measures, education, landscape management, acaricides and other tick-control measures, host-targeted interventions, deer management, and combinations of these approaches.

The objective should be to identify the measures most likely to produce a measurable reduction in human disease risk, taking into account effectiveness, feasibility, cost, environmental effects, animal-welfare considerations, and community acceptance.

8. Determine whether present conditions constitute a “public health threat” under Maine law.

After obtaining the necessary evidence and consulting Maine CDC, we request that you make a written determination as Local Health Officer as to whether conditions on Islesboro constitute a public-health threat or potential public-health threat within the meaning of 22 M.R.S. § 454-A.

If you conclude that the statutory standard is satisfied, We ask you to identify what actions are within your authority and what additional actions should be taken by the Select Board, Maine CDC, Maine IF&W, or other governmental authorities.

9. Provide the Select Board with a written public-health report and recommendations.

At the conclusion of the review, we ask that you provide the Select Board and the community with a written report setting forth:

1. the available evidence concerning tick-borne disease incidence on Islesboro;
2. current deer-density and tick-density information;
3. available information concerning pathogen prevalence in Islesboro ticks;
4. the conclusions of Maine CDC, Maine IF&W, and independent experts;
5. your determination concerning the existence of a public-health threat or potential public-health threat;
6. the interventions supported by the best available scientific evidence; and
7. your recommendations for specific Town and State action.

Please understand that the purpose of our request is not to dictate the outcome of the scientific inquiry. It is to ensure that Islesboro confronts an important public-health issue using current data, independent expertise, and the best available science.

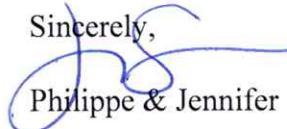
The Town did substantial and thoughtful work on this problem more than a decade ago. We now have the opportunity to build on that work. If current evidence demonstrates that deer reduction is necessary to achieve a meaningful reduction in tick-borne disease risk, the Town should know that and act accordingly in cooperation with the State. If the evidence supports different or additional interventions, we should know that as well.

What should not happen is for Islesboro to allow the issue to remain unresolved simply because it is difficult or controversial.

We would appreciate your advising the Select Board and the community whether you are willing to undertake this review and, if so, what resources or authorization you would need from the Town to do it.

Thank you for your service to Islesboro and for considering this request.

Sincerely,



Philippe & Jennifer Selendy