

Islesboro Select Board
Regular Meeting
Town Office Meeting Room & via Zoom
Wednesday, October 7, 2026 @ 5:30 PM

MINUTES

Members Present:

Chair Peter Rothschild, Vice Chair Peter Anderson, Amy Mulnix, Stephen Pendleton
(Zoom)

Members Absent:

Dylan Purington

Others Present:

Town Manager Janet Anderson, Elizabeth Dyer, Jesse Burns, Harriet Bering, Larry
Hoder, Murton Durkee, Daniel Frohling, Doug Welldon

Others Present via Zoom:

Jen McFarland, Donna Leone, Josh Leach, Lauren Bruce, John-Michael Speranza,
Michael Miller, Bonnie Hughes (6:26)

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

Minutes of September 23, 2026, Regular Meeting.

**MOTION BY P. Anderson, seconded by A. Mulnix, to approve the minutes of September
23, 2026 Regular Meeting, as written. No discussion. Roll Call. Motion passed, 4 yes, 0 no.**

VISITORS COMMENTS/PETITIONS

None.

FERRY SERVICE UPDATE

No update.

SEA LEVEL RISE UPDATE

P. Rothschild stated that the Sea Level Rise Committee will meet tomorrow. Voters at
the Special Town Meeting approved the bond article for the Narrows project.

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

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Up-Island Public Safety Garage: S. Pendleton reported that the insulation is almost all in. Some electrical work still needs to be done. The contractor is aiming to be finished by Thanksgiving.

Murt Durkee added that there are functional lights and switches in the boxes, and the alarm system appears to be wired up. He doesn't think the contractor is responsible to find a 24-7 monitoring service. There's been some plumbing done in the furnace room. There is no air compressor for the air system yet. The fuel tank is placed inside and full; the generator out back is also full of fuel. Interior doors have been delivered. Overhead doors have not arrived yet. An open house will probably be in the cold months. Murt has the sign that will be placed on the building: "Islesboro North Substation."

Public Safety Renovation: S. Pendleton reported that there is some progress in the training room and kitchen areas. Murt added that the sprinkler work needs to be rescheduled.

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- Planning Board: October 19th, 5:00pm.
- Sea Level Rise Committee: October 8th, 4:30pm.
- Town Offices closed: Monday October 12th, Indigenous Peoples' Day
- Groundwater Protection Committee: October 13th, 5:00pm

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

- Packet included Agenda for 10/7/26, Minutes of 9/23/26 Select Board Regular Meeting.
- Committee Minutes
 - None
- Correspondence
 - 9/9/26 Islesboro Public Safety "How to Report an Issue"
 - 9/18/26 email from Frank Start re: Selendy letter of 9/8, LHO duties related to Title 22, MRS § 454-A
- Handouts
 - Select Board ex-officio roles—fill vacancies in Groundwater, Light Station Museum, & Energy committees.
 - Sept 2026, Maine Revenue Services sent out Islesboro's proposed 2027 state valuation. In 2026, Islesboro is \$730,250,000, and in 2027 will be \$793,300,000. We have until November 15 to file a written notice of appeal.
 - P. Rothschild stated that this is what our county tax is based on. We ought to respond and say this is unreasonable.
 - J. Anderson will talk with the assessor, Ed, about writing a letter. The valuation is based on property sales.

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- P. Anderson stated they could theoretically determine that the valuation is higher if we go through this process. He'd be interested in talking with Ed, but doesn't want to risk having them put us at a higher number. He asked if Ed would be able to give us an idea about whether it's worth it to pursue this.
- J. Anderson replied that he'll probably say it's not worth it. We'd have to prove our case.
- 9/30/26 Bar Harbor Wealth Management Capital Reserve sub-accounting.
- Memo regarding the new Narcan boxes. These came to us from Waldo County, from funds that are divided from the opioid settlement. Waldo County has been granted \$510,000 so far. The county plans to distribute up to \$225,000/year for the next three years. This means that they will probably give us refills or more boxes. Melissa Burns has contacted a lot of people about receiving them. We've given a couple to Jen McFarland.
- Manager:
 - 10/1/26: Sent notice advising residents roadside cutting, and if anyone has a plant that they don't want cut to let us know. Work has begun at Town Beach.
 - Select Board training with attorney Kristin Collins. Tentative date: Monday 10/26, 4:00.
 - Patrick Boardman service at Maple Grove Cemetery today.
 - A. Mulnix stated it was a great service, and was well attended.
- Warrant #8 – FY27

CORRESPONDENCE

1. 9/23/26 email from Jesse Burns inquiring about the status of the Transfer Station Burn Pile.
 - J. Anderson stated that we closed the burn pile in late spring of 2025, after receiving the DEP Waste Facility Site Assessment Report. They did an inspection and found our burn piles had not been cleaned out for a couple years. We used to put cold ashes in an empty demo bin, and Casella allowed that, but later stopped allowing it. The DEP also said we couldn't do that. It turned out we needed special bins for holding the ash to get it trucked off. They took the ash and tested it, which cost us \$7,152. That site is clean. If we reopen it, it should have a two-foot-thick soil base, 20' x 25', or a reinforced concrete pad. Ashes must be allowed to accumulate to a depth no greater than 6 inches. DEP also stated that facility personnel or the fire department must be present from the time a burn begins until it is completely extinguished.
 - J. Anderson stated that this would be difficult for Jeff when he works alone, so maybe Jordy or Tom could do that with him on a day that the Transfer Station is closed. She would recommend that a cement base be installed, so we're not

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worried about sediment going into the water or puddling on the dirt. We would need an estimate for the cost.

- Jesse Burns stated that people are burning all over the island. With our current drought, he feels it would be safer to have a Town burn pile. Some properties don't have good spots for burning. Historically on the Town burn pile, it was just leaves and branches. Then the attendants started allowing contractors to dump wood scraps, which had a mix of pressure-treated wood, nails, and other things that shouldn't be burned. He wonders if that's what caused the DEP to be upset.
- J. Anderson replied that Jeff didn't stand there and monitor what people added to the pile. Some people just dump it and go. She feels that if we do burn, we should charge for it. It's going to cost us to remove the ash, and possibly to have someone attending the fire. People would have to show Jeff what they're putting on the pile, and he would charge a fee.
- P. Anderson stated that there is someone at the property behind the dump with a big incinerator unit in a field. Would the rules be different for a different method, and not an open burn pit? Has the Town ever looked into another method? It might eliminate some of the concerns.
- J. Anderson replied that we have, but an incinerator would be very expensive.
- P. Rothschild suggested exploring alternatives. It makes sense to burn collectively.
- Jesse Burns suggested making it so that drop-off is done on a certain day.
- P. Anderson added that we could restrict the burns to certain days, like once a month. It should also be limited to certain items, such as yard waste & brush.
- P. Rothschild suggested discussing it with Jeff to find out what is feasible.
- J. Anderson added that the DEP representative is willing to come back and work with us.
- Larry Hoder stated it was his impression that the burn pile had been closed not just for process, but for testing the soil beneath it, and they discovered things they didn't want to find. Jeff already takes the initiative of looking at what folks bring to the transfer station, and directs where it can go. It probably wouldn't be much more work for him to do that with the burn pile. If there was testing, that's another issue for water protection.
- J. Anderson replied that there were no red flags in the testing.
- Larry Hoder added that the Town may have an interest in more control over what people are burning if it's not on their own property.
- Daniel Frohling asked if the Town has a chipper for wood waste. Maybe people could bring yard waste to the chipper so we can make mulch.
- P. Rothschild mentioned community composting as an option.
- S. Pendleton stated we should explore reopening the burn pile. This would make sense for brush. We could say no to building materials. Maybe we can look at other ideas after getting the burn pile reopened.

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- P. Anderson suggested that a fee structure could be used to pay someone to do this job.
- 2. 10/1/26 letter to Darryl Belz of Maine DOT requesting a Speed Study on Pendleton Point Rd, per the 9/2/26 citizens' request.
 - J. Anderson stated that John King wrote this letter to the DOT. We haven't heard anything back yet.
 - A. Mulnix asked if it's true that we don't have the capacity to do our own speed study.
 - J. Anderson replied that we don't have the laptop that goes with the speed-measuring sign, so can't collect data.
 - C. Reed stated that there is a Safe Roads laptop in the Public Safety radio room.
- 3. 9/30/26 email from John-Michael Speranza re: "Notice of Anticipated Litigation and Demand to Preserve Evidence" regarding an IMB issue.
 - J. Anderson referred to the attorney's response. She stated that we are in receipt of the letter and have passed it on to the parties requested.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Rod Pendleton to discuss groundwater conditions on Islesboro.
 - Rod Pendleton was not present.
 - P. Rothschild reported that the Groundwater Protection Committee had a presentation at the Community Center last week. It was interesting, but inconclusive about whether or not the groundwater demands are being adequately met. Rod and Maddie Bruno recommended everyone test their wells. Pam Larson said there were very few cases of wells going dry. His understanding is that the aquifer is within the bedrock under Islesboro, and it's not as if there's a great reservoir that we're all drawing upon. This is something to be aware of as a potential issue, but there's nothing to do about it at this time.
 - A. Mulnix stated she was in attendance and left with a different feeling. She had the sense that we were less worried that she had been at the outset about water usage, that we have a lot of water, that we do need to be careful, and in particular, we need to be careful locally. We have small pockets of water within the bedrock. If one well becomes infiltrated with salt water, or someone is pumping heavily, that potentially impacts the neighboring wells. It could be a neighbor three houses down. She also heard them say they want to do further study. If we're testing wells, they would want that info.
 - P. Rothschild added that well drilling is variable site-by-site. We cannot draw an island-wide conclusion about one well.
 - Larry Loder reported that the Groundwater Protection Committee is being reinvigorated. There hadn't been a lot of activity over the last 10 – 20 years.

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Islesboro is very fortunate in having a good water supply. Our population has grown, and climate change is upon us. The committee is looking at these issues and trying to discover its mission. He believes it was originally set up as an advisory committee. The committee's approach is two-pronged: community education and testing. In the past, we've tested 25 wells, and the data was all recorded by hand. It's now being digitized. Our two newest members, Rod Pendleton and Maddie Bruno, are both hydrogeologists. They have some new recommendations on testing. The kits from the Town Office have phone numbers that are not current. The presentation was well attended.

- P. Rothschild stated that the Select Board applauds the committee's efforts, and we look forward to hearing more in the future.
2. Energy Committee, Elizabeth Dyer to present Community Energy Resilience Plan (CERP) & Island Institute Fellow Update.
- Elizabeth Dyer, Island Institute Fellow, gave an update about her fellowship work. She will be writing a Community Energy Resilience Plan (CERP), and there's a brief about that in the packet. The plan will be to assess where we are as a town and our energy work so far.
 - In 2018, in the Comprehensive Plan, the authors wrote that they wanted to explore the feasibility and desirability of alternative energy production to reduce energy costs for residents. The Energy Committee has been doing that since 2018, and is now exploring what's next.
 - The Hazard Mitigation Plan from earlier this year underscored the importance of improving power redundancy in critical facilities. We know that outages tend to correlate with extreme weather events or disruptions that are also affecting the ferries. If we're able to increase energy resilience and make sure that during outages, the critical facilities have more reliant energy, that's a great way to make sure resources can flow to where they need to be.
 - Elizabeth invited the Board to reach out with any questions or further conversation.
 - The Energy Committee is having their first Community Energy Resilience Workshop to start planning on November 7th, at 11:00 – 12:30 at the ICC in Community Hall. It's a great opportunity to learn about microgrids as a resilience measure, as well as community solar models. We would like community input. We want to include as many voices as possible. We will be hosting events throughout the year.
 - P. Rothschild asked if the Energy Committee is considering all fuel situations on Islesboro.
 - Harriet Bering replied that the fuel situation is a separate project.
 - Harriet reported that the Energy Committee received a Community Action Grant as of October 1st. That includes funding for someone in a planning function to help us move our projects forward. One of the tasks that we included for that position is to work on the fuel transportation situation. We will present more about that later.

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NEW BUSINESS

1. Explore Forming a Wildfire Risk Mitigation Committee
 - Doug Welldon provided a bullet list of the proposed committee's goals and tasks. The goal would be to recommend to the Town a comprehensive and continuing program to reduce the risk to life and property from wildfire on Islesboro. He went over specific implementation steps outlined on his list.
 - The program must include constant and consistent outreach to assure community buy-in.
 - Once the committee is formed, it's important that they take advantage of new paths for research, and be flexible.
 - A. Mulnix asked if this would be a standing, ongoing committee, or if it would have a time limitation.
 - Doug Welldon replied that it would be a continuing committee.
 - S. Pendleton stated that he is in favor of establishing the committee.
 - P. Anderson asked if we already have a committee that could incorporate this as a subcommittee or focus group. He supports getting people together to do this work.
 - P. Rothschild asked if there are other communities similar to Islesboro with an effective plan. There is great concern, but how we address that is obscure. He asked if the proposed committee would report back to the Select Board.
 - Doug Welldon replied that the committee would find out what other towns are doing, and it would report to the Select Board.
 - P. Anderson asked if we could set it up so that, once the committee recommends a comprehensive plan, we're not expected to keep the committee in existence for the long-term. Perhaps there could be one or two folks in charge of periodic ongoing communication with the community.
 - Doug Welldon replied that if they create a program that can be maintained in the future with gentle monitoring, that's probably okay, but climate change is not going to go away. He stated we need to get this off the ground. He believes the committee will need a big thrust at first, and raising awareness will take a while. He envisions three members at first.
 - A. Mulnix suggested a question for this group might be, what is the right solution for this town? She's thinking more of a study group that might turn into a committee vs. starting a committee that will go on forever.
 - Doug Welldon replied that another way to do it would be to give it a three-year mandate, subject to renewal. He doesn't have an estimate on how long research will take. It depends on what they learn.
 - J. Anderson stated that a Town committee will have more clout, especially with applying for grants.
 - Daniel Frohling added that the Select Board will have more oversight of a committee.

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MOTION BY A. Mulnix, seconded by P. Rothschild, to approve forming a Wildfire Risk Mitigation Committee, to report back to the Select Board in four to six months and present a beginning plan for a path forward. No further discussion. Roll Call. Motion passed, 4 yes, 0 no. Unanimous.

This committee will not have an ex-officio from the Select Board.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. None.

APPROVE WARRANT: FY27 #8

MOTION BY P. Anderson, seconded by A. Mulnix, to approve Warrant FY27 #8. No discussion. Roll Call. Motion passed, 4 yes, 0 no. Unanimous.

APPOINTMENTS:

1. Airport Committee: Steve Larmore

MOTION BY A. Mulnix, seconded by P. Rothschild, to appoint Steve Larmore to the Airport Committee. No discussion. Roll Call. Motion passed, 4 yes, 0 no. Unanimous.

CHAIR COMMENTS

P. Rothschild: I feel apologetic, and a little remiss. In the past, Visitors Comments have gone on for a very long period of time, and I'm resolved to limit that time in the future.

VICE-CHAIR COMMENTS

P. Anderson: Congratulations to our new committee.

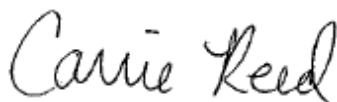
INDIVIDUAL SELECT BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

A. Mulnix: The School is having an Open House on October 21st, the same night as the next Select Board meeting. Maybe one Board member could attend. Discussion about the time of the Select Board meeting. One member can be excused from the meeting.

S. Pendleton: No comments.

MOTION BY P. Anderson, seconded by A. Mulnix to adjourn meeting at 6:47 PM. No discussion. Roll Call. Motion passed, 4 yes, 0 no. Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,



Carrie Reed
Secretary