



Support the News That Supports Your Community *Local news matters. Let's keep it strong—together.*

Familiar faces on town of Stonington's select board ballot for 2026 election

February 26, 2026

BY JACK BEAUDOIN



L-R: Donna Brewer, John Robbins (Photos by Jack Beaudoin).

Penobscot Books Store

988 LIFELINE
maine
No Judgement, Just Help

Special Sections

STONINGTON—Voters here should recognize both candidates running for the select board this year. Chair Donna Brewer has served as a select board member



select board this year. Chair Donna Brewer has served as a select board member since 2010 and previously served on the school board during the 1990s, while her colleague, John Robbins has been on the select board for all but one term in the past 25 years. Both incumbents are running unopposed for the two seats available this year.

Stonington residents can vote from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Monday, March 2, at Town Hall. In addition to the select board positions, there's also a school board seat with a single candidate, Chelsea Torrey (see page 2), running and referendum questions for third-party requests—funding requests from nonprofits which, if approved, would add just under \$90,000 to the 2026 municipal budget.

Donna Brewer

Brewer, who grew up and went to school in Stonington, runs an upholstery business doing “furniture facelifts” while also making and re-covering boat cushions. In her spare time, she jokes, she works on the family scallop farm, sometimes on the water and sometimes driving product to Portland. And in her spare, spare time, she does the books for both businesses.

Brewer’s public service is deeply rooted in her island upbringing and experiences raising four children here. Above all, she wants Stonington to return to the kind of vibrancy and year-round life she knew growing up.

“We are currently a retirement community and I would like to see that balance shift,” she said. “I would like to see houses lit up evenings year-round, not just in the summer. I would really like to see these houses full of families like they were when I was growing up here.”

While she seeks a healthy balance between tourism and year-round business, Brewer specifically supports town efforts to maintain year-round businesses on Main Street, buttress Stonington’s waterfront businesses, and continue to focus on the lobster and aquaculture industries, which she says still drives most of the local economy.

“I fully support the efforts to attract teachers, dentists, doctors, pharmacists, and any of the other people that we need to keep our community going,” she said, adding, “I have always supported our waterfront heritage. I would like to see more opportunity for young people to do jobs on the water.”

If elected, Brewer said she would continue the current board’s priorities— increasing the availability of affordable housing to keep working people on the island, supporting waterfront businesses, and working on ways to keep property taxes affordable. But she also hopes to tackle the vexing challenge of reducing the town’s municipal waste and the expenses it creates.

“The transfer station is a tough one,” she said. “So much of this is out of our control. I will continue to encourage recycling and composting. I also feel that we need to address how we deal with commercial trash.”

She also seeks greater input from residents on town issues. “My door is always open and I encourage people to bring me their concerns and ideas,” she said.

John Robbins

Like Brewer, John Robbins has decades of public service under his belt and a deep connection to the Island. He “admits” he was born in Deer Isle, but his family moved to Stonington sixty years ago. In that time, he went to school, built his own house on Airport Road, and been a jack-of-all-trades: he’s dug clams, fished for lobsters and



Holiday Entertainment E-Edition
November 20, 2025

Coming Events

Use our regional events calendar to plan your week!



Weekly E-News

Get the headlines delivered to your inbox every week. Sign up for our free weekly newsletter so you never miss a story!

Email

[Subscribe](#)

WEEKLY E-NEWS

Get the headlines delivered to your inbox every week. Sign up for our free weekly newsletter so you never miss a story!

Email

[Subscribe](#)

opened up a tree business. He was a commercial diver for 20 years, done some caretaking and operates a plowing business.

He says he first ran for public office because former select board member Richard Larrabee challenged him by saying, "If you think this is so easy, there's a vacant seat so why don't you run?" He's continued to serve because he feels a sense of duty to the town, worrying that there aren't enough people with the willingness or time to hold public positions.

Robbins' vision for Stonington is rooted in fiscal survival and blue-collar pragmatism. His greatest concern is the "tax out" effect on long-term residents and those on fixed incomes. As home prices and valuations rise, the pressures on taxes increase as well, he said, and the town's most vulnerable residents are facing difficult choices. He thinks the town as a whole needs to make similarly hard choices.

"We're a wanting people," he said. "I want this, I want my sidewalk, I want that. But if things keep going this way, people just aren't going to be able to afford it....The people we got here that's pretty much made this place here today, you're going to have to kick 'em out and somebody else's going to have to take over because they can't afford the taxes. It's sad."

Robbins said he doesn't have a specific agenda, but among places he'd look for incremental savings are at the transfer station, the road department and the schools.

"I think with the transfer station we are going to have to do something there," he said. "Maybe we're going to have to shut some days down—so many days open, and some closed."

As for roads, the town is already stretching the budget so thinly that Robbins worries for the health and safety of town employees. For example, he wonders if Stonington should prioritize snow removal for main arteries during storms while waiting until plow drivers get some rest between shifts before tackling secondary roads.

But the most urgent need is getting a handle on the school budget, which is generally outside the control of the Island select boards. "It's one of the biggest bites of money that makes up the budget," Robbins said. "I think we need to spend time there and just see if there's a lot of—I don't know if you want to call it funny money—but are there things that can actually be done without increasing [the annual budget]?"

Having built his own house, he's very supportive of the recent Hewes Family gift of a half-million dollars to support education in the building trades, both for school students and adult learners. He points out that recent housing projects don't work for islanders who are trying to run their own trade-related businesses because there's no place to park trucks and other equipment. "I'm not against affordable housing, but I think they're going about it in a wrong way," he said.

Like Brewer, he encourages people to let him know what they want prioritized over the next three years. "You have to listen to the people to find out what's wanted," he said, "and then be open-minded, listen to the people pretty much and get some type of vision."

More From Island Ad-Vantages Latest News

[Go To The Island Ad-Vantages Latest News Section](#)

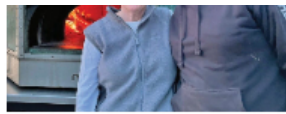




Deer Isle fire station project at a standstill until funding is found



DAR Good Citizens Scholarship awarded to Deer Isle-Stonington High School senior



Pizza from the heart(h) and soul



St. Brendan the Navigator Episcopal Church in Deer Isle hosts unique art show



Isle au Haut's thoroughfare to be dredged



Alleged Deer Isle stalker held without bail after multi-agency police search

Contact Us
Subscribe
Advertise with Us
Visit Our Book Website



Penobscot Bay Press
Community Information Services

River Observer
Island Ad-Vantages
The Weekly Packet
Bay Community Register

Stonington: 69 Main Street, PO Box 36,
Stonington ME 04681. 207-367-2200
Blue Hill: 13 Main Street, PO Box 646, Blue Hill
ME 04614. 207-374-2341

Powered by
Our Hometown

DMCA Notices

Newspaper website content management software and services

©2026 Penobscot Bay Press | All Rights Reserved | Privacy Policy