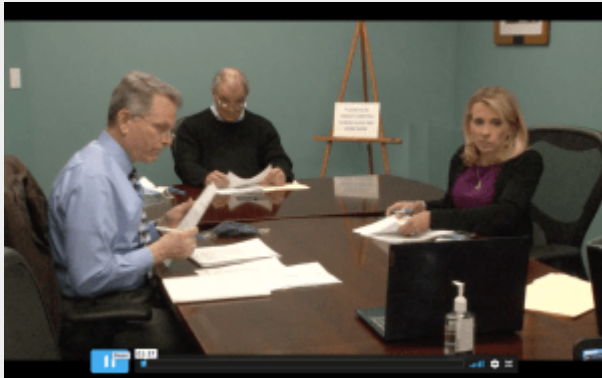


Selectmen Explain Proposed Land Sale Ordinance



On the Agenda for Sept. 13 Special Town Meeting Agenda

Adoption of a proposed new Land Use Ordinance is one of the agenda items voters will be asked to consider at the Sept. 13 Special Town Meeting on Monday, Sept. 13 at 7 p.m. at Samuel Staples Elementary School. The Special Town Meeting will be adjourned to a machine vote to be held on Tuesday, Sept. 21.

The new ordinance governs the purchase, sale and leasing of town owned property. The concept is that if there are to be significant actions taken on town-owned land, then the town should have a say in those transactions.

As it currently stands, the Board of Selectmen may sell or lease land on their own authority without the support of a town meeting. Purchase is still subject to the appropriation process, where the Board of Finance must approve the expenditure and, if over \$20,000, the town meeting must approve it as well.

“I believe that land sales and leases are important actions which the town may take from time to time and the town’s people through the town meeting process should have a say in these,” First Selectman Dave Bindelglass said. “Many other towns do this at the

current time. Previously, an ordinance like this had been brought up at a town meeting and was rejected. At that time, the selectmen had opposed it on the belief that it limited the selectmen's ability to carry out the town's business.

"This version, which the selectmen unanimously support, has a threshold of transactions above \$200,000 in absolute dollar amount or in reasonable valuing of the property if it is leased or sold at less than market value. This allows for the selectmen to carry out lesser transactions such as tax sales or smaller leases (ER9 headquarters for example) without having to go to a town meeting. A number of citizens worked on the crafting of this ordinance, most notably late First Selectmen Bill Kupinse. In preparing the final version, the selectmen were assisted by Bill's son Andrew.

"Part of maintaining the rural character of our town is ensuring the preservation of town land if that is what the people of Easton desire. This ordinance insures that town land will not be sold for development unless that is what the people chose through the town meeting process. I urge the people of Easton to pass this ordinance," Bindelglass said.

Selectmen Kristi Sogofsky said, "This ordinance has gone through many variations over several years. The proposal before us now is the result of negotiation and collaboration, and is one I can support. It gives the people of this town a voice when it comes to major land decisions in the town, which serves the best interest of Easton."

You can read about the other items on the Special Town Meeting agenda [here](#).