Town of Groton (MA)
2018 Annual Town Election
Voting Information

- **Annual Town Election**
  - Groton is holding its Annual Town Election on **Tuesday, May 22, 2018**
  - Polls will be open from 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM
  - Polling Locations:
    - Precinct 1: Groton Senior Center, 163 West Main Street (Route 225)
    - Precinct 2: Groton Country Club, 94 Lovers Lane (opposite Post Office)
    - Precinct 3: Groton Country Club, 94 Lovers Lane (opposite Post Office)

- **Purpose of the Annual Town Election**
  - All Town Offices, one Proposition 2 1/2 override debt exclusion question and eight non-binding questions related to recreational marijuana are on the ballot.
  - These Questions are explained in this brochure.

- **Absentee Ballots**
  - Absentee ballots are available.
  - The last day and hour to request an absentee ballot is Monday, May 21 at 12:00 Noon.
  - Please allow time for mailing or be prepared to vote in the Town Clerk’s office.

- **Voter Information**
  - If you would like to check on your voter registration, polling location or have another voting related question, please contact the Town Clerk’s office
    - Office: 978-448-1100
    - Email: Townclerk@townofgroton.org
    - Web: www.townofgroton.org

- **Annual Town Election Information**
  - Please visit our web site at www.townofgroton.org
  - Select Elections and Voter Information from the list on the left. Look for the Town Elections tab.
BALLOT QUESTION INFORMATION
For May 22, 2018 ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION
Debt Exclusion Proposition 2 ½ Override

As authorized by Chapter 53, section 18B of the General Laws

WHY ARE YOU RECEIVING THIS INFORMATION?

In towns that accept the provisions of section 18B, as Groton did by vote of the 2015 Spring Town Meeting, the Board of Selectmen is required to print and mail to each household where a registered voter resides information relating to each question that will appear on the town election ballot. The information must include (1) the full text of each question; (2) a fair and concise summary of each question, including a one sentence statement describing the effect of a yes or no vote, prepared by the town counsel; and (3) arguments for and against each question, which may not exceed 150 words. When a voter question will appear on the ballot, the statute provides for a request by the town counsel for “written arguments from the principal proponents and opponents of the question,” with a notice period of at least 7 days. The statute also provides that the principal proponents and principal opponents shall be the persons determined by the town counsel to be best able to present the arguments for and against the question. If no argument is received from a proponent or opponent, an argument must be prepared by the town counsel.

Ballot Question #1:

Shall the Town of Groton be allowed to exempt from the provisions of Proposition 2 1/2, so-called, the amounts required to pay for the bonds issued in order to construct a new Senior Center on the site of the existing Senior Center located at 163 West Main Street, West Groton, MA?

Yes ___ No ___

Summary of Question #1:

This question relates to the ability of the Town to pay the annual debt service required for the bonds issued to construct a new Senior Center outside of the limits of Proposition 2½, so-called. The appropriation of funds for this project is on the warrant for the 2018 Spring Town Meeting. Under Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 59, Section 21C, the local appropriating authority may, by two-thirds vote, seek voter approval at a regular or special election to assess taxes for debt service of a particular project in excess of the amount allowed annually under Proposition 2½. (For purposes of Proposition 2½, the local appropriating authority is the Board of Selectmen.) The maximum amount a city or town may levy in a given year is generally referred to as the levy limit. However, under the law, the voters may vote to allow the amount required for annual debt service on projects approved at Town Meeting to exceed the Proposition 2½ limits. This question is for a so-called “debt exclusion,” to exclude the debt service payments from the Proposition 2 ½ limits annually for the life of the debt service. This question is being presented to the voters in order to authorize the Town to raise by taxation, outside of the limits imposed by Proposition 2 ½, the annual debt service to pay for construction of a new Senior Center.
Effect of a Yes or No Vote:

A YES VOTE will allow the Town to pay the annual debt service required by the bonds issued to construct a new Senior Center outside of the limits of the Proposition 2½ levy limit.

A NO VOTE will not allow the Town to borrow the funds necessary to construct a new Senior Center.

Arguments In Favor of And Against Question #1:

IN FAVOR: A YES vote will support the funding for a new senior center. The proposed building has adopted a 21st century model and approach to ensure that the “Senior Center” was transformed to support a “Community Center” model in its outreach to all of Groton’s needs. Voting YES will also demonstrate your commitment to the health, well-being and independence of Groton’s senior citizens. It will eliminate the accessibility and space barriers of the current building, providing adequate space for the foreseeable future and provide a safe and accessible community-focused environment for seniors and the community at large to gather and flourish through education, wellness, socialization and support. It will ensure the needs of the health, wellness and continued independence of Groton’s senior population can be adequately addressed. And, we will allow one of Groton’s most valuable resources, the Council on Aging, to remain faithful to its mission and purpose.

Please vote “Yes” on Question 1.

AGAINST: One should vote against this question to help constrain the cost of government in Groton. While the Council on Aging deems the proposal for a new Senior Center a worthy project, it is an expensive project. Vote “No” so that Groton taxpayers do not incur this financial impact. Help curb the escalating tax burden on our residents.

Please vote “No” on Question 1.

Summary of Questions 2 through 9:

Why are these non-binding questions being asked?

As of December 15, 2016, Recreational Marijuana/Cannabis is legal for adults in the state of Massachusetts. As a result of this legalization, adults have the right to grow plants in limited number for personal use, to order cannabis products for delivery and to ingest cannabis in non-public spaces. As a community we have no ability to impact these new rights.

The Commonwealth’s Cannabis Control Commission (CCC) has enacted, and is enacting further, regulations that control licensing and a myriad of other details affecting recreational marijuana business establishments. The stated goal is for these regulations to become effective on July 1, 2018. These regulations and enforcements are very complicated and detailed, with actions required by cities and towns by specific deadlines if local control is desired.
Groton Town Meeting has previously voted to institute a moratorium on recreational marijuana, which expires on June 30, 2018. The Spring 2018 Town Meeting will be asked to vote on extending that moratorium until December 31, 2018. Extension of the existing moratorium on marijuana establishments will provide additional time to for Groton to make decisions about our local preferences.

Passage of new Zoning Bylaw amendments is the mechanism by which local controls and regulations can be put in place should the Town ultimately have marijuana establishments. The 2018 Spring Town Meeting will be asked to approve an amendment to the Zoning Bylaw that will define the types of recreational marijuana establishments authorized under M.G.L. Ch. 94G, and identify the zoning districts where such establishments are allowed and specify the provisions under which such establishments may be permitted. Current zoning provisions are in place for registered medical marijuana dispensaries only. The proposed Zoning Bylaw amendment that will be presented to the Spring Town Meeting is intended to cover all types of recreational and medical marijuana establishments. Should this pass, it will go into effect once approved by the Attorney General and allow the Town to regulate where such establishments may be located.

Fifty-six (56%) percent of Groton residents voting in the November 8, 2016 State Election voted to legalize marijuana in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Now that it is legal, the Board of Selectmen wants to understand the community’s preferences and desires when it comes to the sale and cultivation of recreational marijuana in the Town of Groton. To that end, the Board of Selectmen has placed the questions below on the May 22 Town Election Ballot. The questions are non-binding, meaning they are to be used by the Board of Selectmen as advisory only. Depending on the results, additional items may be proposed for future Town Meeting and ballot consideration.

The definitions included with the questions are from Chapter 94G of the General Laws and the current regulations of the Cannabis Control Commission.

**Effect of a “Yes” and “No” Vote:**

A **“Yes” vote** is advisory to the Board of Selectmen to support the specified recreational marijuana business type in the Town.

A **“No” vote** is advisory to the Board of Selectmen to not support the specified recreational marijuana business type in the Town.
General Arguments in Favor of And Against Questions 2 through 9:

In Favor:
At the November 8, 2016 State Election, fifty-six (56%) percent of Groton residents that voted in the Election voted to support the legalization of marijuana in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. By taking this vote, Groton residents expressed their support of recreational marijuana sales and cultivation. In addition, a recent survey conducted in December, 2017 had the same percentage of support by residents of this Town. For the past several months, the Planning Board has worked diligently to develop responsible zoning regulations to allow for businesses engaged in the sales, cultivation, manufacture, research and testing of recreational marijuana in Town. Local businesses will generate tax revenues for the Town and additional employment opportunities for residents. Those zoning amendments will be proposed to the 2018 Spring Town Meeting. The Town has shown support for recreational marijuana in Groton. Please vote **YES** on Questions 2 through 9 to advise the Board of Selectmen to support all or some marijuana sales, cultivation, manufacture, research and testing business potential.

Against:
For many, Question 4 on the 2016 ballot was a simple yes/no question on legalizing marijuana. Many who voted to support that right did not understand that they were also voting to allow commercial operations in their communities. Fewer still understood the complexity of what was being enabled. Some have argued that allowing commercial activity will result in tax windfalls, but no one has offered any solid projections. The experiment of allowing commercial activity elsewhere is still young, and the financial and social impacts are uncertain. There is plenty of time to decide to allow the many aspects of the new law in Groton, but there is only one moment where we can pause to see what this experiment yields. Do not be overwhelmed by the number or complexity of the questions below. A **NO** vote on all eight is not binding and does not impact anyone’s right to use or to grow small amounts of marijuana. It simply demonstrates the public’s interest in seeing a binding question on this Fall’s election ballot that would put a hold on turning on the commercial spigot in Groton until we have seen what the impact of this new law yields. To take a measured approach in this new experiment vote **NO** on all 8 questions.

**QUESTION 2:**

**NON-BINDING REFERENDUM** – Should marijuana cultivation be allowed in the Town of Groton? **Yes _____** **No _____**

Definition: Marijuana Cultivation includes growing, processing and packaging marijuana, and transferring marijuana to other Marijuana Establishments, but not to consumers.

**Argument in Favor – Question 2:**
A **YES** vote on Question 2 will advise the Board of Selectmen to support marijuana cultivation business potential in Groton. Marijuana cultivation activities are business-to-business activities and do not include consumer sales. Groton will benefit from a “clean” industry with additional tax revenues.
Argument Against – Question 2:
A NO vote on Question 2 will advise the Board of Selectmen and Planning Board to develop zoning regulations and binding ballot questions to ban establishment of marijuana cultivation businesses in Groton. The nature of marijuana cultivation has the potential to bring security risks and increased traffic to the Town.

QUESTION 3:

NON-BINDING REFERENDUM – Should craft marijuana cooperatives be allowed to operate in the Town of Groton? Yes _____ No _____

A Craft Marijuana Cooperative is a type of Marijuana Cultivator; comprised of multiple residents organized under the laws of the Commonwealth. A cooperative is licensed to cultivate, obtain, manufacture, process, package and brand cannabis or marijuana products to transport marijuana to Marijuana Establishments, but not to consumers directly.

Argument in Favor – Question 3:
A YES vote on Question 3 will advise the Board of Selectmen to support Craft Marijuana Cooperatives in Groton. Craft Marijuana Cooperatives are business-to-business activities and do not include consumer sales. The cooperative model enhances opportunities for the local agricultural community by letting farmers band together to grow a limited amount of marijuana and split the costs and profits.

Argument Against – Question 3:
A NO vote on Question 3 will advise the Board of Selectmen and Planning Board to develop zoning regulations and binding ballot questions to ban establishment of Craft Marijuana Cooperatives in Groton. Security for marijuana growing facilities is a major concern for indoor and outdoor operations, and likely a major expense for Craft Operators. The Town should limit its exposure to marijuana security risks.

QUESTION 4:

NON-BINDING REFERENDUM – Should the manufacture of marijuana products be allowed in the Town of Groton? Yes _____ No _____

Manufacture means to compound, blend, extract, infuse or otherwise make or prepare a cannabis or marijuana product.

Argument in Favor – Question 4:
A YES vote on Question 4 will advise the Board of Selectmen to support the manufacturing of marijuana products in Groton. Marijuana manufacturing is not “just” growing plants but has become an area for technology innovation seeking more safe, accountable and predictable processes and products. Groton can benefit from opportunities created by this industry, and the additional tax revenue.
Argument Against – Question 4:
A NO vote on Question 4 will advise the Board of Selectmen and Planning Board to develop zoning regulations and binding ballot questions to ban the manufacturing of marijuana in Groton. Marijuana manufacturing is not the type of business Groton should enable due to security concerns.

QUESTION 5:

NON-BINDING REFERENDUM – Should the retail sale of recreational marijuana be allowed in the Town of Groton? Yes _____ No _____

Marijuana Retailer means an entity licensed to purchase and transport cannabis or marijuana product from Marijuana Establishments and to sell or otherwise transfer this product to Marijuana Establishments and to consumers. Retailers are prohibited from delivering cannabis or marijuana products to consumers; and from offering cannabis or marijuana products for the purposes of onsite social consumption on the premises of a Marijuana Establishment.

Argument in Favor – Question 5:
A YES vote on Question 5 will advise the Board of Selectmen to support the retail sale of recreational marijuana in Groton. Retail marijuana sales will be legal in Massachusetts this summer. Groton should not prohibit itself from participating in this new industry and benefiting from local tax revenues.

Argument Against – Question 5:
A NO vote on Question 5 will advise the Board of Selectmen and Planning Board to develop zoning regulations and binding ballot questions to ban the retail sale of marijuana in Groton. Retail marijuana establishments may attract clientele from all over the region leading to increased traffic and security concerns. Marijuana use has potential negative effects on some people. Allowing retail sales of marijuana is an implicit endorsement of marijuana use.

QUESTION 6:

NON-BINDING REFERENDUM – Should marijuana research facilities be allowed in the Town of Groton? Yes _____ No _____

Research Facility means an entity licensed to engage in research projects by the Cannabis Control Commission.

Argument in Favor – Question 6:
A YES vote on Question 6 will advise the Board of Selectmen to support marijuana research facilities in Groton. Marijuana research may unlock treatment and cures for many common and exotic diseases. Allowing research facilities in Groton will potentially attract high quality businesses to the Town.
Argument Against – Question 6:
A NO vote on Question 6 will advise the Board of Selectmen and Planning Board to develop zoning regulations and binding ballot questions to ban marijuana research facilities in Groton. There is no guarantee that marijuana research facilities will generate sufficient jobs and tax revenues to offset security risks associated with a research facility.

QUESTION 7:
NON-BINDING REFERENDUM – Should independent testing laboratories for marijuana be allowed in the Town of Groton? Yes _____ No _____

Independent Testing Laboratory means a laboratory that is properly licensed by the Cannabis Control Commission and meets certain accreditation standards. An Independent Testing Laboratory must be independent financially from any Medical Marijuana Treatment Center, Marijuana Establishment or licensee for which it conducts a test.

Argument in Favor – Question 7:
A YES vote on Question 7 will advise the Board of Selectmen to support independent testing laboratories for marijuana in Groton. Testing laboratories test marijuana products to insure the quality of marijuana at the various stages of the product life cycle. Groton would benefit from tax revenues if it hosted such a facility.

Argument Against – Question 7:
A NO vote on Question 7 will advise the Board of Selectmen and Planning Board to develop zoning regulations and binding ballot questions to ban independent testing laboratories for marijuana in Groton. Testing laboratories will need to accept and store quantities of marijuana. The testing processes will test for contaminants, including pesticides, metals, bacteriological contaminants and chemicals. If found, these by-products will be present in Groton and will need to be managed, potentially creating additional security and contamination concerns.

QUESTION 8:
NON-BINDING REFERENDUM – Should marijuana transporters be allowed to store or warehouse marijuana products in the Town of Groton? Yes _____ No _____

Marijuana Transporter means an entity, not otherwise licensed by the Cannabis Control Commission, that is licensed to purchase, obtain, and possess cannabis or marijuana product solely for the purpose of transporting, temporary storage, sale and distribution to Marijuana Establishments, but not to consumers.

Argument in Favor – Question 8:
A YES vote on Question 8 will advise the Board of Selectmen to support allowing marijuana transporters to store or warehouse marijuana products in the Town of Groton. Marijuana storage and warehousing is a necessary function in that business and would provide Groton an opportunity for additional tax revenues.
Argument Against – Question 8:
A NO vote on Question 8 will advise the Board of Selectmen and Planning Board to develop zoning regulations and binding ballot questions to ban allowing marijuana transporters to store or warehouse marijuana products in the Town of Groton. A marijuana warehouse brings additional security concerns to the Town.

QUESTION 9:

NON-BINDING REFERENDUM – Should marijuana microbusinesses be allowed in the Town of Groton? Yes _____ No _____

Microbusiness means a co-located Marijuana Establishment that can be either a Cultivator or Manufacturer or both, in compliance with the operating procedures for each license. A Microbusiness that is a Marijuana Product Manufacturer may purchase no more than 2,000 pounds of marijuana per year from other Marijuana Establishments.

Argument in Favor – Question 9:
A YES vote on Question 9 will advise the Board of Selectmen to support marijuana microbusinesses in the Town of Groton. A marijuana microbusiness will engage in multiple marijuana product activities under the same ownership. Allowing microbusinesses will attract businesses with comprehensive multi-disciplinary marijuana capabilities. The Town would benefit from engaging with a single organization and from the associated tax revenues.

Argument Against – Question 9:
A NO vote on Question 9 will advise the Board of Selectmen and Planning Board to develop zoning regulations and binding ballot questions to ban marijuana microbusinesses in the Town of Groton. Banning microbusinesses would help minimize Groton’s risk potential related to the marijuana industry. Co-located multiple marijuana businesses (i.e. micro-businesses) create additional security concerns.
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<th>Position</th>
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<th>For Three Years</th>
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<td>MICHAEL F. BOUCHARD, 40 Mid Road</td>
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**QUESTION 1:** Shall the Town of Groton be allowed to exempt from the provisions of Proposition two and one half, so called, the amounts required to pay for the bonds issued in order to construct a new Senior Center on the site of the existing Senior Center located at 163 West Main Street, West Groton, MA?

- **YES** ☐
- **NO** ☐

**QUESTION 2:** NON-BINDING REFERENDUM

935 CMR Marijuana Cultivation includes growing, processing and packaging marijuana, and transferring marijuana to other Marijuana Establishments, but not to consumers. Should marijuana cultivation be allowed in the Town of Groton?

- **YES** ☐
- **NO** ☐

**VOTE BOTH SIDES OF BALLOT**
QUESTION 3: NON-BINDING REFERENDUM
935 CMR A Craft Marijuana Cooperative is a type of Marijuana Cultivator; comprised of multiple residents organized under the laws of the Commonwealth. A cooperative is licensed to cultivate, obtain, manufacture, process, package and brand cannabis or marijuana products to transport marijuana to Marijuana Establishments, but not to consumers directly.

Should craft marijuana cooperatives be allowed to operate in the Town of Groton?

YES ☐
NO ☐

QUESTION 4: NON-BINDING REFERENDUM
935 CMR Manufacture means to compound, blend, extract, infuse or otherwise make or prepare a cannabis or marijuana product.

Should the manufacture of marijuana products be allowed in the Town of Groton?

YES ☐
NO ☐

QUESTION 5: NON-BINDING REFERENDUM
935 CMR Marijuana Retailer means an entity licensed to purchase and transport cannabis or marijuana product from Marijuana Establishments and to sell or otherwise transfer this product to Marijuana Establishments and to consumers. Retailers are prohibited from delivering cannabis or marijuana products to consumers; and from offering cannabis or marijuana products for the purposes of onsite social consumption on the premises of a Marijuana Establishment.

Should the retail sale of recreational marijuana be allowed in the Town of Groton?

YES ☐
NO ☐

QUESTION 6: NON-BINDING REFERENDUM
935 CMR Research Facility means an entity licensed to engage in research projects by the Cannabis Control Commission.

Should marijuana research facilities be allowed in the Town of Groton?

YES ☐
NO ☐

QUESTION 7: NON-BINDING REFERENDUM
935 CMR Independent Testing Laboratory means a laboratory that is properly accredited and licensed by the Commission. An Independent Testing Laboratory shall be independent financially from any Medical Marijuana Treatment Center, Marijuana Establishment or licensee for which it conducts a test.

Should independent testing laboratories for marijuana be allowed in the Town of Groton?

YES ☐
NO ☐

QUESTION 8: NON-BINDING REFERENDUM
935 CMR Marijuana Transporter means an entity, not otherwise licensed by the Commission, that is licensed to purchase, obtain, and possess cannabis or marijuana product solely for the purpose of transporting, temporary storage, sale and distribution to Marijuana Establishments, but not to consumers.

Should marijuana transporters be allowed to store or warehouse marijuana products in the Town of Groton?

YES ☐
NO ☐

QUESTION 9: NON-BINDING REFERENDUM
935 CMR Microbusiness means a co-located Marijuana Establishment that can be either a Cultivator or Manufacturer or both, in compliance with the operating procedures for each license. A Microbusiness that is a Marijuana Product Manufacturer may purchase no more than 2,000 pounds of marijuana per year from other Marijuana Establishments.

Should marijuana microbusinesses be allowed in the Town of Groton?

YES ☐
NO ☐
TOWN OF GROTON
COMMITTEE INTEREST FORM

Town Government needs citizens who are willing to give time in the service of their community. If you are interested in serving, on a voluntary basis, on boards and committees within the Town, please complete this form and return to:

TOWN OF GROTON
Board of Selectmen
173 MAIN STREET
GROTON, MA 01450-1237

Date: ____________________________

Name ____________________________________________

  First     M.I.     Last

Address ____________________________________________

Mailing Address (if different) ______________________________________

  Circle One

  GROTON, 01450       WEST GROTON, 01472

Telephone No. (home) ____________________________ (cell) ____________________________

Preferred e-mail Address ____________________________________________

Occupation ____________________________________________

Background ____________________________________________

Town activities/issues, which interest you:

Specific committees or positions in which you are interested:

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RESIDENTIAL POSTAL PATRON
GROTON, MA