

Groton Finance Committee Meeting Minutes 4-2-19

April 2, 2019 beginning at 7:00 p.m.
Groton Town Hall

Present: Chair Gary Green (GG), Vice Chair Bud R. Robertson (BR), Lorraine Leonard (LL), David Manugian (DM), Scott Whitefield (SW), Colby Doody (CD)

Participating remotely: Arthur Prest (AP)

Also present: Mark Haddad (MH), Town Manager, Patricia Dufresne, Town Accountant, Beth Faxon, per diem minute taker

Chairman Gary Green called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Documents Available at Meeting: 2019 Spring Town Meeting Warrant

The Chair noted that Town Meeting is Monday April 29, 2019. The Finance Committee began with taking position on Article 10 of the 2019 Spring Town Meeting Warrant document. Article 10 represents a petition for the legislature to establish a ticket tax in Groton. Indian Hill is exempt from real estate taxes, however the select board has proposed a ticket tax of 5% for performances. This article is to establish clarity on who is exempt, what activities are exempt, etc. It will allow a 5% surcharge on the ticket price to come to the town from Indian Hill Music Center. GG is concerned about the Town having to defend this ticket tax as there is still uncertainty regarding process and implementation.

CD noted it sounds like a tax on the non-profits but he argued it's really a tax on the end user; however, he doesn't support it as written due to the vague nature of the wording.

DM asked about potential revenues, MH estimates approximately \$50,000 annually. SW agrees with the conceptual idea, but feels it is not a finished product.

LL made a motion to recommend article 10 as written, DM seconded.

Roll call vote: NO- CD, SW, BR, GG, DM; YES - LL; Abstained - AP The motion failed. (The Vote: 1-5-1)

BR made a motion to recommend Articles 29 (transfer within the Water enterprise fund), Article 30 (transfer within the Sewer Enterprise fund), and Article 31 (transfer within the Cable enterprise fund). DM seconded

Roll call vote: YES - CD, SW, DM, BR, GG, AP, LL The motion carried. (The Vote: 7-0-0)

BR made a motion to recommend Article 11 Community Preservation Funding accounts. Seconded by LL.

Roll call vote: YES - CD, SW, DM, BR, GG, AP, LL The motion carried. (The Vote: 7-0-0)

MH reviewed each of the CPC Proposals A, B, C, D & F. Noted that the Housing production plan was removed due to receipt of a grant from MRPC to cover this expense.

BR moved to recommend Article 12 CPA Proposed Projects FY20 A, B, C, D and F. DM seconded.

Roll call vote: YES - CD, SW, DM, BR, GG, AP, LL. The motion carried. (The Vote: 7-0-0)

LL made a motion to recommend Article 28 Appropriate Money to offset the snow and ice deficit. DM seconded. MH discussed the \$65,000 deficit for snow and ice budget. The money will be transferred directly to the budget from overlay surplus.

Roll call vote: YES - CD, SW, DM, BR, GG, AP, LL. The motion carried. (The Vote: 7-0-0)

BR made a motion to recommend Article 34, Setting Revolving Fund Spending Limits. LL seconded.

Roll Call vote: YES - CD, SW, DM, BR, GG, AP, LL. The motion carried. (The Vote 7-0-0)

Article 14 Operational funding for Prescott school. The Select Board has entered into a three-year lease of the Prescott school with the Friends of Prescott to manage and operate the building. The Town's share of this outlay is estimated at \$77,000 over the life of the lease. The main expenses include insurance, landscaping, snowplowing. Discussion ensued as to the specifics of the lease agreement and the sprinkler system that is required to lease the top floor of the building (to fully engage the business plan). It was noted that the present FOP business plan requires the lease of the 3rd floor for solvency. This business plan will be reviewed annually, and projects revenue at \$79K, 105K, and 147K respectively over the next 3 years with third floor occupancy. Questions arose as to the amount of support this proposal will receive from voters as many were previously in favor of selling the building. BR made a motion to recommend Article 14, LL seconded. Roll call vote: YES - CD, SW, DM, BR, GG, LL. DEFERRED: AP. The motion carried. (The Vote: 6-0-1)

MH noted the differences between what was originally proposed in the budget and that which was approved in the final draft. These include reductions in police expenses and health insurance, and an increase in the executive assistant's salary. The regional school district assessment was reduced by \$308,000 and the Nashoba Technical High school assessment was increased by \$43,000. The FY20 proposed operating budget, including regional school assessments and excluded debt, is \$39,721,234 or an increase of 3.43%. This proposed budget is expected to be \$197,995 under the anticipated FY 2020 proposition 2 ½ levy limit. BR made a motion to accept the FY 2020 budget as proposed. AP seconded.

Roll call vote: YES - SW, DM, BR, LL, AP, GG, CD. The motion carried. (The Vote:7-0-0)

Discussion ensued regarding the budget message from the town manager. Some of the wording was changed to clearly summarize the work undertaken and process of recommendations by the fire department task force. Changes were recommended for Page 37 of the document (in the starting sentence, remove "reviewed" and fill in the facts). Also, it was suggested to reword the school operating assessment detail with further explanation as to why the assessment was reduced for both Towns (use of District E&D as a budget offset) and the significant impact this will have on the FY21 budget. The Finance Committee will make a recommendation to town meeting regarding the library roof project once bids are received.

MH then updated the Finance Committee on a Tri-board task force meeting he recently attended. This group plans extensive discussion ultimately resulting in a definitive 3- year budget document for both the Town and the School District. GG suggested using a 10-year budget instead of 3-

year. MH stated excellent cooperation thus far amongst the three groups with a goal of completion by May 13, 2019.

D. Manugian left the meeting at 8:30 p.m. M. Haddad left the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

BR made a motion to accept the minutes of 1/26/19 AP seconded.

Roll call vote: YES - CD, SW, GG, LL, AP, BR. The motion carried. (The Vote: 6-0-0)

BR made a motion to accept the minutes of 2/13/19 - SW seconded.

Roll call vote: YES - GG, CD, SW, LL, AP, BR. The motion carried. (The Vote :6-0-0)

GG made a motion to accept the minutes of 3/11/19 as typed and provided by Dawn Dunbar with the addition of email sent by D. Manugian added as an addendum. Seconded by SW.

Roll call vote: YES - CD, GG, SW, BR, AP ABSTAIN - LL. The motion carried. (The Vote: 5-0-1)

BR made a motion to accept the minutes of 3/15/19. LL seconded.

Roll call vote: YES - GG, CD, SW, BR, AP. ABSTAIN-LL. The motion carried. (The Vote: 5-0-1)

AP made a motion to accept the minutes of 3/18/19 as written, BR seconded. Motion withdrawn due to a question regarding previously submitted amendment.

AP made a motion to adjourn at 8:55 p.m. BR seconded.

Roll call vote: YES - CD, SW, BR, GG, LL, AP. The motion carried. (The Vote: 6-0-0)

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Faxon

Town of Groton per diem minute taker

Spr Town Meeting (4/29/2019)

Finance Committee Positions on Articles votes taken :

3/18/2019 3/22/2019 4/2/2019

Y-N-Def

Article #	Description	Dollar Amount	Moved	Seconded	Gary G	Scott W	Dave M	Bud R	Colby D	Art P	Lorraine L	Total Vote
1	Hear Reports											N/A
2	Elected Officials Compensation	88,495	DM	BR								6-0-0
3	Wage & Classification Schedule		AP	DM								6-0-0
4	FY2020 Operating Budget	39,721,234	BR	LL								7-0-0
5	Appropriation to OPEB Trust	169,000	BR	SW								6-0-0
6	FY2020 Capital Budget											
6.1	Engine #3 Replacement	140,875	DM	BR								6-0-0
6.2	Service #1 Replacement	60,000	DM	BR								6-0-0
6.3	Rubber Tire Excavator	140,000	BR	DM								6-0-0
6.4	Hwy Dump Truck	40,000	BR	DM								6-0-0
6.5	IT Infrastructure	40,000	DM	BR								6-0-0
6.6	Dispatch Center Upgrade	60,000	AP	DM								6-0-0
6.7	Municipal Building Repairs	25,000	BR	AP								6-0-0
6.8	Police Station Siding/Roof	20,000	BR	AP								6-0-0
6.90	Transfer Sta Tractor Trailer	40,000	BR	DM								6-0-0
6.10	Police Cruisers	109,845	BR	DM								6-0-0
6.11	Pool Improvements	15,000	BR	DM								6-0-0
6.12	Cart Path Improvements	10,000	BR	DM								6-0-0
6.13	Triplex Greens Mower	5,100	BR	DM								6-0-0

Sp... Town Meeting (4/29/2019)

Finance Committee Positions on Articles votes taken :

3/18/2019 3/22/2019 4/2/2019

Y-N-Def

Article #	Description	Dollar Amount	Moved	Seconded	Gary G	Scott W	Dave M	Bud R	Colby D	Art P	Lorraine L	Total Vote
7	DPW Facilities Renovation FY19											
8	Library Roof FY19											
9	Increase Room Occ. Tax FY21	from 3% to 6%	CD	BR								5-0-0
10	Establish Ticket Tax		BR	DM						A	Y	1-5-1
11	CPC Funding Accounts	738,000	LL	DM								7-0-0
12	CPC Project Recommendations											
12.1	Housing Coord Salary	48,882	BR	DM								7-0-0
12.2	Historic Volumes Cabinet	5,627	BR	DM								7-0-0
12.3	Trf to Conservation Fund	100,000	BR	DM								7-0-0
12.4	1893 Library Roof Repair	300,561	BR	DM								7-0-0
12.5	Fitch's Bridge Wall Repair	45,000	BR	DM								7-0-0
13	NVTHS Roof/Window Project	\$3,704,616/ \$37,000	DM	SW								5-0-0
14	Prescott Maint. Funding FY19	77,000	BR	LL						Def		6-0-1
15	Accessibility Improvements FY19	60,000	DM	BR								5-0-0
16	James Brook Maintenance FY19	50,000	BR	DM								5-0-0
17	Adoption of Stretch Code											N/A
18	Zoning Off-Site/Street Parking											N/A
19	Zoning Housekeeping Updates											N/A
20	Forestry Agreement 10-year											N/A
21	Water Discharge in Public Way											N/A
22	Additional Liquor Licenses											N/A
23	Stormwater Mgmt Amendment											N/A
24	Legislation for Updated Charter											N/A

Sp... Town Meeting (4/29/2019)

Finance Committee Positions on Articles votes taken :

3/18/2019 3/22/2019 4/2/2019

Y-N-Def

Article #	Description	Dollar Amount	Moved	Seconded	Gary G	Scott W	Dave M	Bud R	Colby D	Art P	Lorraine L	Total Vote
25	Cit. Pet. Town Ctr Overlay District											N/A
26	Cit. Pet. Drainage on Cons. Land											N/A
27	FY19 Line Item Transfers <i>reclass only</i>											
28	Snow & Ice Deficit Offset	65,000	LL	BR								7-0-0
29	Water Enterprise Transfer	110,000										7-0-0
30	Sewer Enterprise Transfer	130,000										7-0-0
31	Cable Enterprise Transfers	10,000										7-0-0
32	Prior Year Bills											
33	Surrenden Farms Debt Service	481,660	BR	DM								5-0-0
34	Revolving Fund Spending Limits		DM	BR								7-0-0
35	Increase RE Tax Exemptions		DM	BR								5-0-0
36	Reduce Vet Residency Requiremt		BR	DM								5-0-0
	Total from CPC Funds	500,070										
	Total from Free Cash 4/2019	487,857										
	Total from Enterprise Receipts	250,000										
	Free Cash Certified 9/2018	2,212,873										
	Free Cash Committed 10/2018	1,531,068										
	FY19 Free Cash Bal. Remaining	193,948										

Warrant, Summary, and Recommendations

TOWN OF GROTON



2019 SPRING TOWN MEETING

Groton-Dunstable Middle School Auditorium
344 Main Street, Groton, Massachusetts 01450

Beginning Monday, April 29, 2019 @ 7:00 PM

Attention – Voters and Taxpayers

Please bring this Report to Town Meeting

**THE BUDGET HANDOUT FOR ARTICLE 4 IS AVAILABLE
IN THE BACK OF THE WARRANT**

SPRING TOWN MEETING WARRANT
APRIL 29, 2019

Middlesex, ss.
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
To any Constable in the Town of Groton

Greetings:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are hereby required to notify and warn said inhabitants of the Town of Groton qualified to vote on Town affairs to assemble in the Groton-Dunstable Middle School Auditorium in said Town on Monday, the twenty-ninth day of April, 2019 at Seven O'clock in the evening, to consider all business other than the election of Town Officers and on the twenty-first day of May, 2019 at an adjourned session thereof to give their ballots for:

Vote for One	Board of Assessors	3 Years
Vote for One	Board of Health	3 Years
Vote for Two	Select Board	3 Years
Vote for One	Commissioner of Trust Funds	3 Years
Vote for Two	Groton-Dunstable Regional School Committee	3 Years
Vote for One	Groton Electric Light Commission	3 Years
Vote for Two	Park Commission	3 Years
Vote for One	Park Commission	1 Year
Vote for Two	Planning Board	3 Years
Vote for One	Planning Board	1 Year
Vote for One	Sewer Commission	3 Years
Vote for Two	Trustees of the Groton Public Library	3 Years
Vote for One	Water Commission	3 Years
Vote for One	Groton Housing Authority	5 Years

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 renovate and reconstruct the Department of Public Works Facilities located at 600 Cow Pond Brook Road, Groton, MA?

Yes _____ No _____

QUESTION 2:

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 install a new roof on the Groton Public Library located at 99 Main Street, Groton, MA?

Yes _____ No _____

ARTICLE LISTINGS

Article 1:	Hear Reports	4
Article 2:	Elected Officials Compensation	4
Article 3:	Wage and Classification Schedule	4
Article 4:	Fiscal Year 2020 Annual Operating Budget	5
Article 5:	Appropriate FY 2020 Contribution to the OPEB Trust Fund	5
Article 6:	Fiscal Year 2020 Capital Budget	6
Article 7:	Renovation and Upgrade – DPW Facilities	9
Article 8:	Library Roof	10
Article 9:	Increase Local Room Occupancy Excise	10
Article 10:	Petition Legislature to Establish a Ticket Tax in Groton	11
Article 11:	Community Preservation Funding Accounts	13
Article 12:	Community Preservation Funding Recommendations	14
Article 13:	Nashoba Valley Tech Roof and Window Project Approval	16
Article 14:	Operational Funding for the Prescott School	16
Article 15:	Provide Funding for Accessibility Improvements	17
Article 16:	Maintenance of James Brook	18
Article 17:	Amend General Bylaws to Adopt the Stretch Code	18
Article 18:	Amend Zoning Bylaw – Off-Site Off-Street Parking	20
Article 19:	Amend Zoning Bylaw – Housekeeping Changes	22
Article 20:	Agreement – Forestry Activity	23
Article 21:	Amend General Bylaws – Discharge of Water onto a Public Way	23
Article 22:	Petition General Court for Additional Liquor Licenses	24
Article 23:	Amend Chapter 198 – Stormwater Management	25
Article 24:	Revote Groton Charter	25
Article 25:	Citizens' Petition – Town Center Overlay District	26
Article 26:	Citizens' Petition – Use Conservation Land for Drainage	26
Article 27:	Current Year Line Item Transfers	27
Article 28:	Appropriate Money to Offset the Snow and Ice Deficit	27
Article 29:	Transfer Money within the Water Enterprise Fund	28
Article 30:	Transfer Money within the Sewer Enterprise Fund	28
Article 31:	Transfer Money within the Cable Enterprise Fund	29
Article 32:	Prior Year Bills	29
Article 33:	Debt Service for Surrenden Farms	29
Article 34:	Establishing Limits for the Various Revolving Funds	30
Article 35:	Accept Law Increasing Real Estate Tax Exemption	30
Article 36:	Accept Provisions of M.G.L., c. 59, §5	31
	Budget Report of the Town Manager and Finance Committee to Town Meeting	34
	Appendix A – Fiscal Year 2019 Proposed Operating Budget	
	Appendix B – Fiscal Year 2019 Wage and Classification Schedule	

ARTICLE 1: HEAR REPORTS

To see if the Town will vote to hear and act on the report of the Select Board and other Town Officers and Committees, or to take any other action relative thereto.

SELECT BOARD

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*
Finance Committee: *No Position*

Summary: *To hear reports of Town Boards, Committees and Commissions and to accept the annual report and other reports that may be presented to Town Meeting.*

ARTICLE 2: ELECTED OFFICIALS' COMPENSATION

To see if the Town will vote to allow the following compensation for the following elected officials: Town Clerk - \$88,430; Town Moderator - \$65; for the ensuing year, or to take any other action relative thereto.

SELECT BOARD

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*
Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Summary: *To provide compensation for elected officials as proposed by the Town Manager.*

ARTICLE 3: WAGE AND CLASSIFICATION SCHEDULE

To see if the Town will vote to amend and adopt for Fiscal Year 2020 the Town of Groton Wage and Classification schedule as shown in Appendix B of this Warrant, or to take any other action relative thereto.

**SELECT BOARD
TOWN MANAGER**

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*
Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Summary: *The purpose of this Article is to set the wage and classification schedule for the three (3) employees covered by the Personnel Bylaw. Under the policy of the Select Board, these employees receive the same benefits as contained in the Town Supervisors' Union Contract. These employees will receive a two (2) percent cost of living adjustment in Fiscal Year 2020.*

ARTICLE 4: FISCAL YEAR 2020 ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, and/or borrow pursuant to any applicable statute, a sum or sums of money as may be necessary to defray the expenses of the Town for the next fiscal year (2020), and act upon the budget of the Finance Committee, or to take any other action relative thereto.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE
SELECT BOARD
TOWN MANAGER**

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: *In accordance with Section 6 of the Town Charter, the Finance Committee conducts its annual budget process by receiving the Town Manager's proposed balanced budget on or before December 31st; meeting with department heads and boards; holding public budget hearings in preparation for issuing its recommendations to Town Meeting; and presenting its budget recommendations at the Spring Town Meeting. The budget handout for this Article is contained in Appendix A of this Warrant. Please also see the Town Manager's Report which includes the Finance Committee's and Select Board's recommendations.*

ARTICLE 5: APPROPRIATE FY 2020 CONTRIBUTION TO THE OPEB TRUST

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, and/or borrow pursuant to any applicable statute, a sum or sums of money, to be expended by the Town Manager, to be added to the Other Post-Employment Benefits Liability Trust Fund as authorized by Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 32B, Section 20, or to take any other action relative thereto.

**SELECT BOARD
TOWN MANAGER**

Select Board: *Recommended (4 In Favor, 1 Deferred – Giger)*
Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Summary: *The purpose of this article is to fund the Town's OPEB Liability. The Select Board and Finance Committee have adopted a funding policy for this purpose. One of the funding goals is to commit to an annual appropriation to the Trust that would keep the Net Present Value Liability from growing until such time as the Town can begin to pay down the liability. In Fiscal Year 2020, the anticipated amount necessary for this purpose is estimated to be \$169,000. This Article will seek an appropriation of \$169,000 from Free Cash to add to the OPEB Liability Trust Fund.*

ARTICLE 6: FISCAL YEAR 2020 CAPITAL BUDGET

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, and/or borrow pursuant to any applicable statute, a sum or sums of money, to be expended by the Town Manager, for the purpose of funding the Fiscal Year 2020 Capital Budget, or to take another other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER

Summary: *The following is the proposed Town Manager's Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2020:*

Item #1 – Engine 3 Replacement	\$140,875	Fire/EMS
---------------------------------------	------------------	-----------------

Summary: *The Fire Chief has instituted an equipment replacement program to improve the equipment of the Department, while reducing the overall fleet. The second major reduction in the fleet will occur with the replacement of Engine 3 and Rescue 1. Like the Ladder and Engine 2 replacement last year, a truck can be designed to meet the multi-role aspect of today and tomorrow's fire service. At a cost today of \$650,000 the rescue-pumps of the future allow multi-role capability that will work equally well at fighting fires, but also be able to carry the equipment seen on a conventional rescue truck. The replacement of these two trucks separately would cost \$875,000 or more yielding a significant savings in capital costs. It is proposed that the Town borrow the funds required for FY 2020 through the Commonwealth's State House Notes method and pay off the debt over five years.*

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*

Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Item #2 – Service 1 Replacement	\$60,000	Fire/EMS
--	-----------------	-----------------

Summary: *The service truck is used by the duty staff to answer lower priority calls during the day and night hours. By utilizing the service truck, it saves the number of times that larger apparatus need to respond to emergencies. Having a couple smaller vehicles ultimately prolongs the life of front line apparatus thus saving maintenance and replacement costs.*

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*

Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Item #3 – Rubber Tire Excavator**\$140,000****Highway**

Summary: *This type machine will allow the DPW to work in the street with better visibility for the workers in and around the work site. It will be the primary machine doing any road excavation and will take up less of the travel lane compared to a traditional backhoe. It will also be equipped with a mower head and be one of the primary mowers on the road that can reach back and clear and trim the road side. GELD will also contribute to the cost of the machine. The Town is purchasing one machine instead of two, backhoe and mower, to keep costs down compared to two different machines thereby saving on insurance and maintenance.*

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*

Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Item #4 – Dump Truck**\$40,000****Highway**

Summary: *At the 2018 Spring Town Meeting, the Meeting authorized the acquisition of a new Dump Truck for the Highway Department by borrowing the necessary funds (\$185,000) through the Commonwealth's State House Notes method and pay off the debt over five years. This will be the second of five payments for the Dump Truck.*

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*

Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Item #5 – IT Infrastructure**\$40,000****Town Facilities**

Summary: *This item in the Capital Budget was established eight years ago and has been very successful. In Fiscal Year 2020, the following items will be purchased/upgraded with this allocation: Ten (10) new computers; replace aging servers and storage arrays with newer equipment; investment to expand the network and keep equipment and maintenance costs current; and network switch upgrades and increased wireless coverage.*

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*

Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Item #6 – Dispatch Center Upgrade**\$60,000****Town Facilities**

Summary: *The Public Safety Dispatch center was recently upgraded and remodeled in FY 2010 with Grant funds obtained by the Town. In order to keep the Public Safety Dispatch Center up to date and current, it was proposed that another update/remodel take place in 2018. Town Meeting has appropriated \$60,000 in each of the last two Fiscal Years for this purpose. In an effort to continue to update and improve the facility, the Chief of Police has requested an additional appropriation of \$60,000 in FY 2020. It is the Town's intention to apply for further Public Safety Grants to pay for this update, but it needs to be planned for in the Capital Improvement Plan.*

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*

Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Item #7 – Municipal Building Repairs \$25,000 Town Facilities

Summary: *This appropriation will be used to continue to maintain all municipal buildings by performing various maintenance activities to prevent major breakdowns in our municipal building infrastructure. Priorities continue to change when it comes to the minor repairs and upgrades in our municipal buildings. With a set line item which is separate from minor capital, the Town can be flexible and change priorities instead of just 'doing it because it is on a list.'*

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Item #8 – Paint Police Station/Roof Repairs \$20,000 Town Facilities

Summary: *The Police Station was painted seven years ago. It is scheduled to be repainted in Fiscal Year 2020. This will help maintain the building and add to its longevity. In addition, the roof of the building will need to be repaired as it is coming up on 25 years since it was first constructed.*

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Item #9 – Tractor Trailer Unit \$40,000 Transfer Station

Summary: *At the 2018 Spring Town Meeting, the Meeting authorized the acquisition of a new Tractor Trailer Unit for the Transfer Station by borrowing the necessary funds (\$160,000) through the Commonwealth's State House Notes method and pay off the debt over four years. This will be the second of four payments for the Unit.*

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Item #10 – Police Cruisers \$109,845 Police Department

Summary: *Purchase of two police cruisers and related equipment for replacement of cruisers that are no longer cost effective to maintain. This allows for less mileage per year, better maintenance scheduling, assignment of cars to officers and for a programmed replacement schedule that assures line cars are rotated out at reasonable mileage and wear.*

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Item #11 – Pool Improvements \$15,000 Country Club

Summary: *The pool area will require a number of new items in Fiscal Year 2020: Diving Board, repainting of pool, repairs to the deck, Slide, Filter Housing, Playground, Spray Pad.*

Select Board: Recommended (3 In Favor, 2 Deferred – Manugian, Degen)
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Item #12 – Cart Path Improvements**\$10,000****Country Club**

Summary: *Most of the existing golf carts paths are in terrible shape and need to be graded, repaired and repaved to ensure safe access to the course.*

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*

Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Item #13 – Triplex – Greens Mower**\$5,100****Country Club**

Summary: *The Country Club owns two triplex mowers. Three years ago, the Town proposed, and Town Meeting agreed, to replace one of the mowers so that the Club would have a backup mower. One cuts the greens and the other is used to cut the tees and collars around the greens. The Town Meeting agreed to finance the mower over five years. This is the fourth of five payments for a total cost of \$25,500.*

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*

Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

or to take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER

ARTICLE 7: RENOVATION & UPGRADE – DPW FACILITIES

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, and/or borrow pursuant to any applicable statute, a sum or sums of money, to be expended by the Town Manager in Fiscal Year 2019 and thereafter, for the purpose of reconstructing, equipping, furnishing and new construction to upgrade the Department of Public Works Facilities and all other costs associated and related thereto, including construction administration, on the site of the existing Department of Public Work Facilities located at 600 Cow Pond Brook Road, Groton, MA; and to authorize the Town Manager to contract for and in the name of the Town for such purpose and to do all things necessary for the accomplishment of the foregoing purpose, including the expenditure of all appropriated funds and any funds received from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or other sources for such construction, provided, however, that no funds may be expended hereunder for this purpose unless and until the Town approves a Proposition 2½ Debt Exclusion pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 59, Section 21C, Clause (k), or to take any other action relative thereto.

**TOWN MANAGER
PUBLIC WORKS BUILDING COMMITTEE**

Select Board: *Recommendation Deferred Until Town Meeting*

Finance Committee:

Summary: *The 2018 Fall Town Meeting appropriated funding to design and put out to bid improvements to the current DPW Facility, as well as, new construction to meet the needs of our Public Works Department. Since funding was approved, the Town Manager appointed a Building Committee to assist in the design and oversight of the proposed improvements. The final construction documents have been advertised for bid, with bids due prior to Town Meeting. A full presentation of costs and tax impact will be made to the 2019 Spring Town Meeting. If approved, this article would be contingent on a debt exclusion vote at the Annual Town Election on May 21, 2019.*

ARTICLE 8: LIBRARY ROOF

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, and/or borrow pursuant to any applicable statute, a sum or sums of money, to be expended by the Groton Board of Library Trustees in Fiscal Year 2019 and thereafter, for the purpose of reconstructing, repairing and replacing the roof on the Groton Public Library and all other costs associated and related thereto, including construction administration, on the Groton Public Library located at 99 Main street, Groton, MA; and to authorize the Groton Board of Library Trustees to contract for and in the name of the Town for such purpose and to do all things necessary for the accomplishment of the foregoing purpose, including the expenditure of all appropriated funds and any funds received from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or other sources for such construction, provided, however, that no funds may be expended hereunder for this purpose unless and until the Town approves a Proposition 2½ Debt Exclusion pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 59, Section 21C, Clause (k), or to take any other action relative thereto.

BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES

Select Board: *Recommendation Deferred Until Town Meeting*
Finance Committee:

Summary: *Similar to the previous Article, the 2018 Fall Town Meeting appropriated funds to design and put out to bid a project that would provide for a new roof and various improvements at the Groton Public Library. Since design funding was provided, the Board of Library Trustees have been working with their hired consultant to determine the best options for these improvements. The final construction documents have been advertised for bid, with bids due prior to Town Meeting. A full presentation of costs and tax impact will be made to the 2019 Spring Town Meeting. If approved, this article would be contingent on a debt exclusion vote at the Annual Town Election on May 21, 2019.*

ARTICLE 9: INCREASE LOCAL ROOM OCCUPANCY EXCISE

To see if the Town will vote to increase the local room occupancy excise pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 64G, §3A from three (3%) percent to six (6%), said rate to take effect on or after July 1, 2020, or to take any other action relative thereto.

SELECT BOARD

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*
Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Summary: *The 2018 Spring Town Meeting accepted Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 64G, §3A which authorized the Department of Revenue to collect and deliver to the Town of Groton a local excise on the rental of rooms in hotels, motels, lodging houses and bed and breakfast establishments. At that time, the Town Meeting set the rate at three (3%) percent in the first year (effective July 1, 2019), with the intent to return to Town Meeting and request that the tax be increased to six (6%) percent in the second year (effective July 1, 2020), which is the maximum rate that communities may impose. The purpose of this Article is to request that the rate be increased to the maximum rate effective on July 1, 2020.*

ARTICLE 10: PETITION LEGISLATURE TO ESTABLISH A TICKET TAX IN GROTON

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to petition the General Court to enact legislation that would authorize the Town of Groton to collect a tax in an amount to be set by the Select Board but not to exceed 5% on purchases of tickets for admission to any live performance or event in Venues located in the Town of Groton, which legislation shall be substantially in the form below, and to authorize the Select Board to approve amendments to the bill before enactment by the General Court which shall be within the scope of the general public objectives of the petition, or to take any other action relative thereto

Authorization for the Town of Groton to Impose and Collect a Tax on the Admission Charge for Certain Events Open to the Public in the Town of Groton

Section 1: The following definitions shall apply

"Admissions" means the charge levied by any Venue located in the Town of Groton and paid by a person to gain entrance to any performance or event at such a Venue. Admissions includes, but is not limited to, charges for season tickets, ticket packages and cover charges. Admissions does not include any charge levied for parking.

"Event" means a performance by paid professionals in a venue with a capacity of two hundred (200) or more, giving a live performance within their professional field.

"Venue" means any facility within the Town of Groton which holds any live performance or event, with a capacity of two hundred (200) or more.

"Person" means, but is not limited to, an individual, group, corporate entity, or other legally-defined entity.

"Vendor" means any facility that is a Venue.

Section 2: Establishment and Imposition of Tax

Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, for the purpose of providing revenue for operational costs of the Town of Groton, there is hereby levied upon persons purchasing admission, and shall be paid and collected, an admissions tax of an amount to be set by the Select Board but not to exceed five percent (5%) on the amounts persons pay as admission to any Venue. The tax shall apply to every admission at such Venue for any performance, or event in which a fee is charged to a person and collected by a Vendor.

Section 3: Intended Use

All revenues received by the Town from the admissions tax levied pursuant to Section 2 shall be designated for the purpose of supporting the operational budget, including municipal and schools, of the Town of Groton.

The full amount of the revenue collected by the Town from the admissions tax shall be allocated to the general fund and subject to appropriation and approval by the Groton Town Meeting. The Select Board of the Town of Groton is authorized to set the amount of the tax in an amount up to and including five percent (5%) but not any percentage beyond 5% and is authorized to adopt rules and regulations regarding the manner of collection of the tax authorized by Section 2.

Section 4: Effective Date

The tax levied and imposed pursuant to the provisions of this chapter shall apply to any and all performances or events taking place on and after July 1, 2020.

Section 5: Collection and Remittance

Said Vendor shall on or before the twentieth day of the month following the end of each quarter (January, April, July and October) make and file a return for the preceding quarter, on forms prescribed by the Town Manager of the Town of Groton, showing the receipts from admissions charged, the amount of tax Vendor collected from persons purchasing such admissions, showing the amount due from the Vendor to the Town of Groton for the period covered by the return and such other information as the Town Manager deems necessary for the proper administration of the tax. The return shall be signed by the Vendor or an authorized agent thereof. Returns shall be filed by mailing or hand delivery to the Office of the Town Manager together with payment to the Town Treasurer in the amount of tax shown to have been collected by Vendor and due thereon. Failure to timely file and pay shall result in the assessment of a penalty of ten (10%) of the tax owed for that period. The Town Manager may for good cause extend the time for making and filing returns. Additionally, the Town Manager, if it is deemed necessary in order to ensure the payment of the tax imposed by this chapter, may require returns and payment to be made for other than quarterly periods.

Section 6: This act shall take effect upon its passage.

SELECT BOARD

Select Board: *(2 In Favor – Degen, Manugian, 1 Against – Pease, 2 Deferred)*

Finance Committee:

Summary: *The purpose of this article is to impose a ticket tax of an amount up to and including five (5%) percent on persons paying for all tickets sold for admission to any live performance or event in Venues located in the Town of Groton. The implementation of this tax will be borne by the end user and should not have a negative financial impact on the Venues to which this tax is imposed.*

ARTICLE 11: COMMUNITY PRESERVATION FUNDING ACCOUNTS

To see if the Town will vote to make the following appropriations from the Community Preservation Fund: Allocation of Community Preservation Funds to the following sub accounts:

CPC Operating Expenses:	\$ 5,000
Open Space Reserve:	\$ 73,800
Historic Resource Reserve:	\$ 73,800
Community Housing Reserve:	\$ 73,800
Unallocated Reserve:	\$511,600

or to take any other action relative thereto.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*

Finance Committee:

Community Preservation Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Summary: *This is an accounting procedure that is necessary to ensure the Community Preservation Committee will have access to the funds raised during Fiscal Year 2020. Except for the CPC Operating Expenses, none of these funds will be spent without additional approval at Town Meeting. The following chart shows the current balances in each Reserve, and what the balance will be when these funds are transferred into those accounts:*

<u>Funding Account</u>	Balance	
	<u>Current Balance</u>	<u>After FY 2020 Appropriation*</u>
Open Space Reserve	\$ 29,963	\$ 103,763
Historic Resource Reserve	\$ 31,917	\$ 105,717
Community Housing Reserve	\$ 495,142	\$ 568,942
Unallocated Reserve	\$ 266,859	\$ 783,459

*This is the amount of funding available to fund various projects presented in Article 12 and to pay Surrenden Farm Debt Service.

ARTICLE 12: COMMUNITY PRESERVATION FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS

To see if the Town will vote to adopt and approve the recommendations of the Community Preservation Committee for Fiscal Year 2020, and vote to implement such recommendations by appropriating a sum or sums of money from the Community Preservation Fund established pursuant to Chapter 44B of the General Laws, and by authorizing the Select Board, with the approval of the Community Preservation Committee, to acquire, by purchase, gift or eminent domain, such real property interests in the name of the Town, or enforceable by the Town, including real property interests in the form of permanent affordable housing restrictions and historical preservation restrictions that will meet the requirements of Chapter 184 of the General Laws, as may be necessary or proper to carry out the foregoing, or to take any other action relative thereto.

CPC Proposal A: Housing Coordinator FY20 \$48,882

Summary: *The Town established the position of Housing Coordinator in 2009, with the salary being paid out of the Community Preservation Administrative Account. Five years ago, the Community Preservation Committee approved the increase of the position to 25 hours and requested that it become an annual funding item to be approved by Town Meeting, with the funding to come from the Community Housing Reserve. Town Meeting has approved this for the last five years. This will be the sixth year that this position will be funded in this manner.*

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously

Finance Committee:

Community Preservation Committee: Recommended Unanimously

CPC Proposal B: Historic Volumes Storage Cabinet \$5,627

Summary: *This request is to make a one-time purchase of a lockable fire-resistant storage cabinet to store the recently preserved historic volumes of the town. From 2005 to 2011, the CPC allocated CPA funds to restore approximately 100 historic volumes, which are securely stored in the Town Clerk's vault. These volumes occupy approximately 50% of the space. The vault is out of capacity, and additional records are added on a continuous basis. The benefits of obtaining this cabinet would be increased secure storage capacity, dedicated storage for historic records, facilitated public access to the documents (under Clerk's Office supervision) and to free up space in the main vault.*

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously

Finance Committee:

Community Preservation Committee: Recommended Unanimously

CPC Proposal C: Conservation Fund**\$100,000**

Summary: *The Conservation Commission is requesting \$100,000 in CPA funds to be added to the Town's Conservation Fund to help preserve open space, protect water resources and wildlife habitat, and preserve land for agricultural, recreational, and forestry activities. The Conservation Fund allows the Town to move quickly in the event a priority parcel becomes available. The Commission's goal is to maintain an amount between \$750,000 and \$1,000,000 in the Conservation Fund. As of January 10, 2019, the Conservation Fund balance is \$657,338.*

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*

Finance Committee:

Community Preservation Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

CPC Proposal D: 1893 Library Roof Preservation**\$300,561**

Summary: *The Board of Library Trustees submitted for CPA funding support for up to \$395,000 to preserve and protect Groton's beautiful and historic 1893 library building from ongoing ice dam issues and water infiltration under its current (original) slate roof. Building Envelope Scientists have studied all issues and recommend all new underlayments with ice and snow shield six feet up under the slate roof to fix the problem; but in order to do this, 20-25% or more of the original slate would have to be removed, and the National Park Service Historic Preservation Brief 29 recommends that if removing that much slate on a roof nearing the end of its life, it is best to replace the entire roof, as many of the slates would be damaged during reinstallation. A new roof would also necessitate replacement of supporting components of copper gutters, flashings, and downspouts. This project is being requested in conjunction with a FY2020 Town Capital Project Request for \$1.125 million to redo both the 1893 building roof and drainage with the 1999 addition steep slope composite slate and low slope membrane roof and drainage systems, as the 1999 systems are all experiencing widespread failure, and have been for many years, resisting all attempts at repairs and solutions.*

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*

Finance Committee:

Community Preservation Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

CPC Proposal F: Fitch's Bridge Wall Repair**\$45,000**

Summary: *This application is requesting funding to disassemble and rebuild the existing retaining wall on historic Fitch's Bridge where it is beginning to fail. The DPW will disassemble and repair the existing retaining wall on the bridge and rebuild using granite blocks obtained from an outside source. The bridge was restored using CPC funds but this portion of the project was not included at the time. The repairs are needed to protect the installed bridge from damage. All permitting will be done by the Town.*

Select Board: *Recommended (4 In Favor, 1 No Position – Degen)*

Finance Committee:

Community Preservation Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

ARTICLE 13: NASHOBA VALLEY TECH ROOF AND WINDOW PROJECT APPROVAL

To see if the Town will approve the Three Million, Seven Hundred Four Thousand, Six Hundred and Sixteen Dollars (\$3,704,616) borrowing authorized by the Nashoba Valley Technical High School District for the purpose of paying costs of the Replacement of Roofs, Windows, and Doors at Nashoba Valley Technical High School, 100 Littleton Road, Westford, MA 01886, including the payment of all costs incidental or related thereto (the "Project"), which proposed repair project would materially extend the useful life of the school and preserve an asset that otherwise is capable of supporting the required educational program, and for which the District may be eligible for a school construction grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority ("MSBA"), said amount to be expended at the direction of the School Committee. The MSBA's grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need, as determined by the MSBA, and any Project costs the District incurs in excess of any grant approved by and received from the MSBA shall be the sole responsibility of the District and its member municipalities. Any grant that the District may receive from the MSBA for the Project shall not exceed the lesser of (1) fifty-five percent (55%) of eligible, approved project costs, as determined by the MSBA, or (2) the total maximum grant amount determined by the MSBA, with a failure to vote approval being deemed a denial, or take any other action relative thereto.

NASHOBA VALLEY TECH SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*

Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Summary: *The Nashoba Valley Technical High School Committee has requested that this Article be placed on the Warrant for the 2019 Spring Town Meeting. The School has been accepted into the Massachusetts School Building Authority's (MSBA) Accelerated Repair Program for roof and window replacement for the Nashoba Valley Technical High School located at 100 Littleton Road in Westford Massachusetts. A majority of the member Towns must vote to approve this project. Please note that should this project be approved, the debt service for this project will be apportioned among the member communities based on student population from each community in a given year. It is estimated that the debt on this project will be paid back in 20 years. In FY 2020, the Town of Groton's assessment for this project is estimated to be approximately \$37,000.*

ARTICLE 14: OPERATIONAL FUNDING FOR PRESCOTT SCHOOL

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds and/or borrow a sum or sums of money, to be expended by the Town Manager, for the purpose of providing funding to maintain and operate the Prescott School in future fiscal years, said funds to be used to supplement any rental income received from tenants of the building, or to take any other action relative thereto.

SELECT BOARD

Select Board: *(2 In Favor – Pine, Giger, 2 Against, 1 Deferred – Pease)*

Finance Committee:

Summary: The 2018 Spring Town Meeting appropriated \$32,000 to operate the Prescott School and the 2018 Fall Town Meeting appropriated an additional \$30,000 for a total of \$62,000. The Select Board has entered into a three (3) year lease of the Prescott School with the Friends of Prescott to manage and operate the Building. The Friends will be leasing space within the building to various tenants in compliance with local zoning. They have agreed to ensure that they will cover \$20,000 of the operational costs of the Prescott School by the third year of the lease. The \$62,000 was supposed to cover the Town's obligations over three (3) years, but the first-year costs have exceeded earlier estimates. The purpose of this Article is to appropriate the additional funding necessary to cover the Town's expenses over the life of the lease. It is estimated that this additional expense will be \$77,000.

ARTICLE 15: PROVIDE FUNDING FOR ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, and/or borrow pursuant to any applicable statute, a sum or sums of money, to be expended by the Town Manager in Fiscal Year 2019, to implement the recommendations of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Self Evaluation and Transition Plan for Town Buildings and all costs associated and related thereto, pursuant to 28 CFR §35.150(d), prepared by the Northeast Independent Living Program, dated January 2019, or to take any other action relative thereto.

COMMISSION ON ACCESSIBILITY

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously

Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Summary: The Commission on Accessibility worked with the Northeast Independent Living Program (NILP) in 2018 to update the Town's ADA Self Evaluation/Transition Plan originally prepared in 1996. The Commission and NILP evaluated ten Town-owned buildings. The study includes recommendations and deadlines for necessary improvements to bring the Town facilities into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Architectural Access Board Regulations, 521CMR. Improvements for accessibility are required at the Groton Country Club, Legion Hall, Lost Lake Fire Station, Police Station, Groton Public Library, Town Hall and the Transfer Station. (Please note that Prescott School, while requiring accessibility improvements, is not being dealt with until such time as a final renovation/reconstruction plan is determined for that building). The Commission is requesting \$60,000 to implement the plan and bring these buildings into ADA Compliance. The Self-Evaluation/Transition Plan and cost estimates are on file in the Town Clerk's office, the Land Use Department, and on the Town's website.

ARTICLE 16: MAINTENANCE OF JAMES BROOK

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, and/or borrow pursuant to any applicable statute, a sum or sums of money, to be expended by the Town Manager, for the maintenance of James Brook as it impacts Broadmeadow Road, and all costs associated and related thereto, or to take any other action relative thereto.

SELECT BOARD

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously

Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Summary: *For the last several years, Broadmeadow Road has experienced a significant number of closings due to flooding on the Road because of drainage issues with James Brook. In an effort to improve the situation and allow for better drainage, the DPW Director has recommended to the Select Board that routine maintenance and partial dredging of the channels of James Brook be completed. This work will allow for the better flow of James Brook and reduce flooding of Broadmeadow Road. It is anticipated that this work will cost approximately \$50,000. A full report will be made to the 2019 Spring Town Meeting.*

ARTICLE 17: AMEND GENERAL BYLAWS TO ADOPT THE STRETCH CODE

To see if the Town will vote to enact a new Chapter 168 of the Town of Groton General Bylaws, entitled "Stretch Energy Code" for the purpose of regulating the design and construction of buildings for the effective use of energy, pursuant to Appendix 115.AA of the Massachusetts Building Code, 780 CMR, the Stretch Energy Code, including future editions, amendments or modifications thereto, with an effective date of January 1, 2020, as follows:

CHAPTER 168 – STRETCH ENERGY CODE

- §168-1 Definitions**
- §168-2 Purpose**
- §168-3 Applicability**
- §168-4 Stretch Code**

§168-1 Definitions

International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) - The International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) is a building energy code created by the International Code Council. It is a model code adopted by many state and municipal governments in the United States for the establishment of minimum design and construction requirements for energy efficiency and is updated on a three-year cycle. The baseline energy conservation requirements of the MA State Building Code are the IECC with Massachusetts amendments, as approved by the Board of Building Regulations and Standards.

Stretch Energy Code - Codified by the Board of Building Regulations and Standards as 780 CMR Appendix 115.AA of the Massachusetts building code, the Stretch Energy Code is an appendix to the Massachusetts building code, based on further amendments to the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) to improve the energy efficiency of buildings built to this code.

§168-2 Purpose

The purpose of 780 CMR 115.AA is to provide a more energy efficient alternative to the Base Energy Code applicable to the relevant sections of the building code for new buildings.

§168-3 Applicability

This code applies to residential and commercial buildings. Buildings not included in this scope shall comply with 780 CMR 115.AA, as indicated.

§168-4 Stretch Code

The Stretch Code, as codified by the Board of Building Regulations and Standards as 780 CMR Appendix 115.AA, including any future editions, amendments or modifications, is herein incorporated by reference into the Town of Groton General Bylaws, Chapter 168. The Stretch Code is enforceable by the inspector of buildings or building commissioner and effective as of January 1, 2020.

or to take any other action relative thereto.

SELECT BOARD

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*
Finance Committee: *No Position*

Summary: *The Select Board has voted to pursue a Green Community Designation for the Town of Groton. Seeking this designation will allow the Town to apply for State Grants that can pay for energy improvements in the many Town facilities. The first step in applying for this designation is the adoption of the so-called Stretch Energy Code that requires all new construction in the Town of Groton to meet various energy efficiencies. It's important to point out that additions or renovations to existing houses in Groton do not have to comply with this Code. Furthermore, the current edition of the Massachusetts Building Code has already incorporated many of the requirements in the Stretch Energy Code. A full presentation of the requirement of the Stretch Energy Code will be made at Town Meeting.*

**ARTICLE 18: AMEND ZONING BYLAW - §§218-4, 218-13, 218-25 AND 218-28
OFF-SITE OFF-STREET PARKING**

To see if the Town will vote to amend Zoning By-Laws as follows:

1. Amend Section 218-4 by adding the definition of "Off-site Off-Street Parking" with new word definitions being incorporated into the existing text in order alphabetically with the existing word definitions, as follows:

Off-Site Off-Street Parking: Parking area on a lot for the benefit of and serving the parking needs of a use on a separate non-contiguous lot, subject to the provisions of Sections 218-25, 218-28, and 218-32.1

2. By amending Section 218-13 Schedule of Use Regulations, by adding a new line item 114 – Off-Site Off-Street Parking as stated below:

		RA	RB	NB	VB	GB	I	P	O
114	Off-Site Off-Street Parking	PB	PB	PB	PB	PB	PB	N	N

3. By amending Section 218-25, Site Plan Review by adding a new subsection 218-25(B)(2)(e) as follows:

218-25(B)(2)(e) Off-site Off-street Parking

4. By amending Chapter 218, by adding a new Section 218-28, entitled "Off-Site Off-Street Parking as follows:

Section 218-28 Off-site Off-Street Parking

A. Purpose

To provide relief and standards for properties that cannot provide or satisfy the off-street parking requirements on-site due to unique circumstances including but not limited to topography, lot size, lot shape, existing building placement, or an authorized change of use where off street parking can be secured off site on property under the same ownership or control in a manner that is compatible with the surrounding uses.

B. Applicability

A property owner or lessee, consistent with the applicable provisions herein, may petition for Off-site Off-street Parking on a non-contiguous property under their control and demonstrate the unique circumstances associated with their property for which parking cannot be provided on site. The petitioner must demonstrate the proposed parking will address the unique circumstance associated with satisfying off street parking on their property in a manner consistent with the character of its surroundings.

C. Standards/Conditions

- A locus plan showing the location of the proposed Off-site Off-street Parking in relation to the property being served with sufficient detail for the Planning Board to determine adequate proximity exists
- Lighting overspill, glare, headlights
- Visual Impact mitigation measures such as setbacks, landscaping, visual screening
- Noise
- Applications shall be subject to Section 218-25 Site Plan Review
- Applications shall be subject to Section 218-32.1 Special permit
- Parking layout and construction
- Circulation and traffic consideration
- Applicant must have controlling interest in both properties (ownership or leasehold)
- Special permit will run with the applicant unless the applicant owns both properties and records a deed restriction binding both lots to common ownership for the special permit to remain in force
- The use requiring the parking must be a permissible use (Y/SP) on the Off-site lot
- Use limited to parking of registered motor vehicles. Commercial vehicles over 7,500 pounds (curb weight) shall not be permitted. Storage of equipment, pods, trailers, shall not be permitted.
- Third party, paid parking is not permitted.
- Specify/limit number of spaces
- The provisions of this section may be used in conjunction with 218-23D Shared Parking

or to take any other action relative thereto.

PLANNING BOARD

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*

Finance Committee: *No Position*

Planning Board: *Recommended Unanimously*

Summary: *The proposed Zoning Bylaw amendment establishes Off-site Off-street Parking on a non-contiguous lot as a new use allowable by grant of a Special Permit by the Planning Board. The purpose of the amendment is to provide relief in certain cases where off-street parking space is not available on the lot where the principal structure is situated, and where the non-contiguous lot is under the applicant's control. Applications under this Zoning Bylaw amendment would be subject to the provisions of Site Plan Review and the Special Permit process.*

ARTICLE 19: AMEND ZONING BYLAW – HOUSEKEEPING CHANGES

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Code of the Town of Groton, Chapter 218, Zoning, as follows:

1. Amend §218-18.C(1)(d)[3] to correct a typographical error as follows:

§218-18.C(1)(d)[3] – correct typographical error:

Replace the word “massive” with the word “massing”.

2. By amending §§218-4, 218-20, and 218-27.B, Subsidized Elderly Housing; change to “Age Restricted Housing as follows:

§218-4 – Definitions – Change the term “Subsidized Elderly Housing” to “Age Restricted Housing”.

§218-20 – Schedule of Intensity Regulations - Change the reference to “subsidized elderly housing” in Note 1 to “age restricted housing”.

§218-27.B - Change the title of the section and all other references in the section, from “subsidized elderly housing” to “age restricted housing”.

or to take any other action relative thereto.

PLANNING BOARD

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously

Finance Committee: No Position

Planning Board: Recommended Unanimously

Summary: *The purpose of this article is to make housekeeping updates to the Zoning Bylaw, Chapter 218 of the Town Code. The typographical error in Section 218-18.C(1)(d)[3] needs to be corrected in order to restore the original intent of the provision as it relates to the use of certain architectural design elements. Zoning provisions relative to housing for persons 55 years of age and older were adopted in 1982 under the name of “Subsidized Elderly Housing”. Replacing this term with “Age Restricted Housing” reflects changes in common nomenclature since the adoption of the provisions nearly four decades ago.*

ARTICLE 20: AGREEMENT – FORESTRY ACTIVITIES

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Town Manager, on behalf of the Conservation Commission and Water Commission, to enter into an agreement with an individual/individuals to conduct forestry activities on properties managed by the Conservation Commission and Water Commission for a term not to exceed ten (10) years, or to take any other action relative thereto.

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*

Finance Committee: *No Position*

Conservation Commission: *Recommended Unanimously*

Summary: *The Conservation Commission and Water Commission manage approximately 2,100 acres of Town-owned land of which 85% is classified as forested. In 2018, the Conservation Commission began a comprehensive evaluation of all its lands and defined 11 management areas consisting of blocks of adjacent parcels as well as lands recently or presently being managed (e.g., Surrenden Farms, Shattuck Homestead). In total, these management areas account for 75% of all lands under the custody of the Conservation Commission. A 10-year contract term will allow for continuity of management services between the Forester and the Town. A major goal of the Commission seeks to accomplish during the term of this contract is to work with the Forester to create and implement stewardship management plans for each identified management area. The Forester shall provide watershed, forestry and vegetative management services in order to: 1) protect the forests from fire, insects, invasive plants, disease and vandalism; 2) improve the forest through cutting practices which favor the creation of the ideal watershed forest; 3) enhance wildlife habitat; 4) maintain forest aesthetics; and 5) provide a revenue source to fund land management initiatives.*

ARTICLE 21: AMEND BYLAWS – DISCHARGE OF WATER ONTO A PUBLIC WAY

To see if the Town will vote to amend the General Bylaws of the Town by creating a new Chapter 127 entitled "Discharge of Water Onto A Public Way" as follows:

CHAPTER 127 – DISCHARGE OF WATER ONTO A PUBLIC WAY

§127-1 Discharge Prohibited

Discharge of water onto a public way is prohibited. No person shall alter existing conditions as to allow, or cause, the man-made diversion or backup of water onto a public roadway or sidewalk of the Town, by pump, down spout, swale, grading of land, or any other method, so as to create a hazard to vehicle or pedestrian travel on such roadway or sidewalk.

§127-2 Violations

Whoever violates this Bylaw shall, within 30 days of receiving a notice of violation, take any and all corrective actions necessary to prevent future violations of this Bylaw, or submit to the Department of Public Works a plan of action to prevent future violations of this Bylaw.

§127-3 Enforcement

As an alternative to criminal prosecution, the Director of Public Works or any police officer of the Town may elect to enforce this Bylaw by utilizing the non-criminal disposition procedure set forth in M.G.L., c.40, §21D, as may be amended from time to time. The fine for each non-criminal violation shall be \$300 and each day or portion of a day on which a violation exists shall constitute a separate offense.

or to take any other action relative thereto.

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*
Finance Committee: *No Position*

Summary: *The purpose of this Article is to create a Bylaw that would prohibit the discharge of water from private property onto a public way. It would provide for the enforcement and ability to fine individuals who violate this proposed Bylaw.*

ARTICLE 22: PETITION THE GENERAL COURT FOR ADDITIONAL LIQUOR LICENSES

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to petition the General Court for special legislation increasing the number of liquor licenses available in the Town of Groton as follows:

- Three (3) additional licenses for the sale of on premises all alcoholic beverages
- Two (2) additional licenses for the sale of off premises all alcoholic beverages

And to authorize the General Court to make clerical and editorial changes of form only to the bill, unless the Select Board approves amendments to the bill before enactment by the General Court, and the Select Board shall be authorized to approve amendments which shall be within the scope of the general public objectives of the petition, or to take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*
Finance Committee: *No Position*

Summary: *This article will request that the General Court increase the number of liquor licenses allowed under State Law in the Town of Groton. The Select Board's office has received several inquiries for additional licenses and the purpose of this article is to petition the Legislature for this increase in an effort to create more business opportunities in the Town of Groton.*

ARTICLE 23: AMEND CHAPTER 198 – STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

To see if the Town will vote to amend Chapter 198, Stormwater Management - Low Impact Development, of the Code of the Town of Groton, Section 198-14 Extension, by striking out the words "two years" and inserting in their place the words "three years," as follows:

§198-14. Extension.

A full or limited stormwater management permit shall be valid for two years three years from the date the permit is issued. The Committee may grant extensions for additional time upon written request for renewal no later than 30 days prior to expiration of the permit.

or to take any other action relative thereto.

EARTH REMOVAL STORMWATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*
Finance Committee: *No Position*

Summary: *The Committee is proposing an amendment to the Stormwater Management By-law so permits lapse in three years rather than two years. If adopted, the three-year time period for Stormwater Permits will be consistent with Orders of Conditions issued by the Conservation Commission. Additionally, Chapter 40A, section 9, of MGL was amended in 2016 to extend the time within which a special permit may lapse from two years to not more than three years.*

ARTICLE 24: PETITION LEGISLATURE TO ESTABLISH AN UPDATED CHARTER

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to petition the General Court to enact legislation that would establish an updated charter for the Town of Groton substantially in the form on file with the office of the Town Clerk and to authorize the General Court to make amendments thereto before enactment by the General Court which shall be within the scope of the general public objectives of this petition, subject to the approval of the Groton Select Board, or to take any other action relative thereto

SELECT BOARD

Select Board: *Recommendation Deferred Until Town Meeting*
Finance Committee: *No Position*

Summary: *The General Court was unable to enact before expiration of the 2017-2018 legislative session the Groton Home Rule Petition that updated our Charter. Originally voted upon by the Town in 2017, and then edited thereafter at the request of the General Court, that proposed legislation has been refiled for the new legislative session that started this year in 2019. This warrant article is submitted in case the General Court needs action upon this article in order to complete its work on the proposed charter update.*

ARTICLE 25: CITIZENS' PETITION – TOWN CENTER OVERLAY DISTRICT

To see if the Town will vote to include the property situated at 11 Lowell Road which is shown on the Groton Assessors' Maps as Map 113 Block 11 and described in a deed recorded with the Middlesex South District Registry of Deeds in Book 71584, Page 410 in the Town Center Overlay District, Section 218-30.2 of the Groton Zoning By-Law, or to take any other action relative thereto.

CITIZENS' PETITION

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>
John B. Amaral	62 Flavell Road	Therese J. Keoseian	34 Flavell Road
Diane M. Amaral	62 Flavell Road	Mihran Keoseian	34 Flavell Road
Andrea L. Myette	69 School House Road	Gregg Yanchenko	61 Skyfields Drive
Peter C. Myette	69 School House Road	George Faircloth	61 Paquawket Path
Peter MacGregor	291 Old Ayer Road	Michelle Collette	43 Windmill Hill Road

Select Board: *Recommended (4 In Favor, 1 Deferred – Giger)*
Finance Committee: *No Position*

Summary: The following summary was prepared by the petitioners and represents their view on the Article: *This article requests that voters approve the inclusion of the property known as 11 Lowell Road, aka The Water's House, in the Town Center Overlay District (TCOD). The property is zoned RA. The applicant is proposing to develop a mixed-use project consisting of residential, small retail/office and hospitality. The development will adhere to the purpose of the TCOD: "to promote a socially and economically vibrant town center by enabling civic, commercial and residential development that is consistent with the design guidelines for the district and with the Town's Comprehensive Master Plan". The plan will incorporate green space and landscaping similar to The Groton Inn, the abutting property.*

ARTICLE 26: CITIZENS' PETITION – USE CONSERVATION LAND FOR DRAINAGE

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board and the Conservation Commission to enter into an agreement with the Reedy Meadow Estates Trust, by lease or otherwise, for use of a portion of Town of Groton Conservation property shown as Assessors Map 228, Parcel 59, for purposes of a drainage easement, said easement area being shown on a plan entitled "Overview Plan in Groton, MA, Reedy Meadow Estates, Date: February 4, 2019, revised February 18, 2019, prepared for Reedy Meadow LLC, Tyngsboro, Massachusetts, Prepared by Land Engineering & Environmental Services, Inc." on file in the Office of the Town Clerk; and to authorize the Select Board to petition the General Court for any legislation necessary therefore, or to take any other action relative thereto.

CITIZENS' PETITION

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>
Andrew George	13 Olivia Way	Scott Hepburn	14 Olivia Way
Angela George	13 Olivia Way	Joel Meiners	6 Olivia Way
Elizabeth Esielionis	3 Olivia Way	Brianne Harris	2 Olivia Way
Benjamin Kichen	3 Olivia Way	Jason Brown	2 Olivia Way
Kristina Csaplar	14 Olivia Way	Sandra McNabb	5 Olivia Way

Select Board:
Finance Committee: *No Position*

Summary: The following summary was prepared by the petitioners and represents their view on the Article: We the homeowners of Reedy Meadow Estates Trust are seeking a drainage easement onto Map 228, Parcel 59. We believe this drainage easement would address the following issues: 1. Continuous flooding impacting road access on Red Pepper Lane and Olivia Way; 2. Continuous pumping to alleviate flooding in basements, causing significant health and safety risks; 3. Ponding in back yards which lead to potential standing water health hazards; 4. Erosion damage to the central common area; 5. Availability of emergency vehicle access & commercial services to residents; 6. Allowing the excess overflow to be handled in an environmentally conscious and controlled manner. Since the flooding issues have arisen, we have been consulting with the Groton Earth Removal & Stormwater Advisory Committee, the Conservation Commission and the Planning Board to ensure that we are requesting the best possible action. We thank the town for their continued support.

ARTICLES 27 THROUGH 36 WILL BE PART OF THE CONSENT AGENDA. PLEASE SEE EXPLANATION PROVIDED BY THE TOWN MODERATOR AFTER ARTICLE 37.

ARTICLE 27: CURRENT YEAR LINE ITEM TRANSFERS

To see if the Town will vote to transfer certain sums of money within the Fiscal Year 2019 budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

SELECT BOARD

Select Board: Recommendation Deferred Until Town Meeting
Finance Committee:

Summary: To transfer money within the Fiscal Year 2019 Budget should the need arise. A handout explaining any necessary transfers will be available at Town Meeting.

ARTICLE 28: APPROPRIATE MONEY TO OFFSET SNOW AND ICE DEFICIT

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, and/or borrow a sum or sums of money, to be expended by the Town Manager, to reduce the deficit in the Fiscal Year 2019 Snow and Ice Budget, as approved under Article 4 of the 2018 Spring Town Meeting, or to take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: This article will allow the Town to fund any deficit in the Snow and Ice Account in Fiscal Year 2019.

ARTICLE 29: TRANSFER WITHIN WATER ENTERPRISE FUND

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Groton Water Department to transfer a sum or sums of money from the Water Enterprise Fund Surplus to the Fiscal Year 2019 Water Department Budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*

Finance Committee:

Water Commission: *Recommended Unanimously*

Summary: *This article allows the Water Department to transfer money from its surplus account to cover any deficit in the Fiscal Year 2019 budget. More information will be provided at Town Meeting to explain any transfer requested under this article.*

ARTICLE 30: TRANSFER WITHIN SEWER ENTERPRISE FUND

To see if the Town will vote to transfer a sum or sums of money from the Sewer Enterprise Fund Surplus to the Fiscal Year 2019 Sewer Enterprise Department budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

BOARD OF SEWER COMMISSIONERS

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*

Finance Committee:

Sewer Commission: *Recommended Unanimously*

Summary: *This article allows the Sewer Department to transfer money from its surplus account to cover any deficit in the Fiscal Year 2019 budget. More information will be provided at Town Meeting to explain any transfer requested under this article.*

ARTICLE 31: TRANSFER WITHIN CABLE ENTERPRISE FUND

To see if the Town will vote to transfer a sum or sums of money from the Cable Enterprise Fund Surplus to the Fiscal Year 2019 Cable Enterprise Department budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

CABLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Select Board:
Finance Committee:
Cable Advisory Committee:

Summary: *This article allows the Cable Advisory Committee to transfer money from its surplus account to cover any deficit in the Fiscal Year 2019 budget. More information will be provided at Town Meeting to explain any transfer requested under this article.*

ARTICLE 32: PRIOR YEAR BILLS

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds a sum or sums of money for the payment of unpaid bills from prior fiscal years, or to take any other action relative thereto.

SELECT BOARD

Select Board: Recommendation Deferred Until Town Meeting
Finance Committee:

Summary: *Town Meeting approval is required to pay bills from a prior fiscal year. A list of unpaid bills will be provided at Town Meeting.*

ARTICLE 33: DEBT SERVICE FOR SURRENDEN FARMS

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds, a sum or sums of money, pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44B, Section 5 for debt service for Fiscal Year 2020 for the Surrenden Farm Land Acquisition, as authorized under Article 1 of the April 24, 2006 Special Town Meeting, or to take any other action relative thereto.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously
Community Preservation Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Summary: *This article appropriates the debt payments for the Surrenden Farm Land Purchase. Funding for this article will come from Community Preservation Funds. The anticipated debt service for Fiscal Year 2020 is \$481,660. To fund this, \$70,000 would be paid from the Open Space Reserve and \$411,660 would be paid from the Unallocated Reserve.*

ARTICLE 34: ESTABLISHING LIMITS FOR THE VARIOUS REVOLVING FUNDS

To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c. 44 sec 53E½ and the Revolving Fund Bylaw, to amend the Revolving Fund Bylaw to add or delete any revolving account and/or to set the FY 2020 spending limits for the various revolving funds as follows:

Program or Purpose	FY 2020 Spending Limit
Stormwater Management	\$20,000
Conservation Commission	\$50,000
Building Rental Fund	\$50,000
Affordable Housing Marketing	\$50,000
Home Recycling Equipment	\$10,000
Access for Persons with Disabilities	\$10,000
Boat Excise Tax Fund	\$ 5,000

or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER

Select Board: *Recommended (4 In Favor, 1 Deferred – Manugian)*
Finance Committee:

Summary: *This Article sets the limit of annual spending for the various revolving funds authorized by previous Town Meeting vote and currently set forth in the Town's Bylaw for said purpose.*

ARTICLE 35: ACCEPT LAW INCREASING REAL ESTATE TAX EXEMPTION

To see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 59, §5C1/2, inserted by Section 14 of Chapter 62 of the Acts of 2014, for the purpose of increasing the real estate tax exemptions by 100 percent to all persons who qualify for property tax exemptions under Clauses 17, 17C, 17C1/2, 17D, 22, 22A, 22B, 22C, 22D, 22E, 22F, 22G, 37, 37A, 41, 41B, 41C, 41C½, 42, 43, 56 or 57 of G.L. c. 59, §5, or to take any other action relative thereto.

BOARD OF ASSESSORS

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*
Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Summary: *This article is geared toward 70+ seniors, surviving spouses (widows/widowers), legally blind persons and veterans with service-connected disabilities. It would increase the exemption under state statute up to 100% of the exemption. These state exemption programs all have different eligibility requirements (inquire within the Assessor's office for specific eligibility requirements) in order to receive the specific exemption and are designed to help the neediest within our community to continue to remain in their homes by helping to relieve some of the property tax burden.*

ARTICLE 36: ACCEPT PROVISIONS OF M.G.L., CHAPTER 59, §5

To see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 59, §5, last paragraph/sub-clause of clause 23 which, for clauses 22, 22A, 22B, 22C, 22D, 22E and 22F of section 5, allows the Town to reduce from five consecutive years to one year the residency requirement for, making certain veterans and their surviving spouses or parents, to be eligible for the property tax exemptions of said clauses 22 through 22F under Massachusetts General Laws, or to take any other action relative thereto.

BOARD OF ASSESSORS

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*

Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Summary: *The Town of Groton has adopted the provisions of MGL Chapter 59, Section 5 Clause 22 for a Veteran domiciled in Massachusetts for 6 consecutive months before entering the service or domiciled in Massachusetts for not less than 5 years prior to filing for his/her exemption. By local option, the residency requirement can be reduced to 1 year by a vote of Town Meeting.*

Moderator's Consent Agenda to Save Time at Town Meeting

To save time at Town Meeting, the Moderator will use a procedure known as a consent agenda. It is the bundling of non-controversial articles into a single motion to be voted on by Town Meeting. Routinely used in other towns, the consent agenda can save time by not requiring a main motion, a second, an explanation and a vote on every routine article to which there is no objection or question.

What Articles Are Included

The consent agenda will generally consist of regular housekeeping articles unanimously supported by the Select Board and Finance Committee. The warrant identifies which articles are proposed for the consent agenda. If the articles in the consent agenda changes prior to Town Meeting but after the printing of the warrant, voters will be advised at Town Meeting.

How Consent Agendas Work

When the meeting reaches the first article to be included in the consent agenda, the moderator will explain the process. The moderator will read the title of every article included in the consent agenda. He will pause after each article to allow any voter who has a question on the article to loudly state, "hold."

The held article will be set aside for individual consideration apart from the consent agenda. The voter who holds an article will be asked to identify him- or herself and be prepared to speak to the article later in the meeting.

After the meeting agrees on which articles to include in the consent agenda, there will be no debate and the moderator will immediately call for a vote. Every article included in the consent agenda will either pass or fail depending on the majority vote.

The articles held from the consent agenda will then be taken up individually in the order in which they appear in the warrant.

What Voters Need to Do

Town Meeting voters should review in advance the articles in the consent agenda and be ready to state which article(s) they wish to hold for individual consideration

Any voter with questions about Town Meeting procedure may call Town Moderator Jason Kauppi at (978) 391-4506 or email him at moderator@townofgroton.org.

Hereof fail not and make return of your doings to the Town Clerk on or before time of said meeting.

Given under our hands this 8th Day of April in the year of our Lord Two Thousand Nineteen.

Barry A. Pease

Barry A. Pease, Chairman

Alison S. Manugian

Alison S. Manugian, Vice Chairman

John R. Giger

John R. Giger, Clerk

Joshua A. Degen

Joshua A. Degen, Member

Rebecca H. Pine

Rebecca H. Pine, Member

OFFICERS RETURN

Groton, Middlesex

Pursuant to the within Warrant, I have this day notified the Inhabitants to assemble at the time, place, and for the purpose mentioned as within directed. Personally posted by Constable.

Constable

Date Duly Posted

BUDGET MESSAGE FROM THE TOWN MANAGER AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

TOWN OF GROTON FISCAL YEAR 2020

Pursuant to Article 6, Sections 6-3 and 6-4 of the Charter of the Town of Groton, Massachusetts, the Finance Committee, Select Board and Town Manager are pleased to submit for your consideration the Proposed Fiscal Year 2020 Operating Budget for the Town of Groton. This is the fourth year that the Select Board and Finance Committee provided direction prior to the development of the proposed budget in compliance with the revised Financial Policies of the Town (and soon to be approved Revised Charter). The Finance Committee and Board met with the Finance Team prior to the issuance of the initial budget instructions to review objectives and develop specific goals that would be followed during the development of the Fiscal Year 2020 Proposed Operating Budget. The direction provided by the Select Board and Finance Committee was as follows:

1. The total increase in the Municipal Budget (minus excluded debt) shall be no greater than 2.54%.
2. The Town Manager shall submit a balanced budget, without the need of an override of Proposition 2½.
3. With the exception of fully funding the two new Firefighter Positions in FY 2020, there shall be no new benefited positions proposed.
4. The Town Manager shall track changes in revenue projections (limited to three times per year) and provide revised estimates on December 31, 2018, March 31, 2019 and October 31, 2019.

The budget submitted to the Finance Committee and Select Board on December 31, 2018 met these directives. The Proposed Budget kept municipal spending to an increase of 1.93%, which was well under the 2.54% Guidance while continuing to provide the same level of services that our residents currently receives. The initial proposed budget also set aside funding for both the Groton Dunstable Regional School District and the Nashoba Valley Technical School District that was in line with previous long-term projections. At the time the Budget was submitted in December, it utilized all anticipated levy capacity expected in Fiscal Year 2020. Thanks to our practice of sound financial planning and smart budgeting, the original budget provided confidence that the revenue forecast for Fiscal Year 2020 was healthy and would allow the Town to maintain service.

Since the original budget was submitted, Governor Charlie Baker submitted his proposed State Budget, that included an anticipated increase in State Aid of approximately \$55,000. In addition to this anticipated increase in State Aid, there are two other issues that allowed the Town Manager to provide a proposed budget under the guidance. First, in FY 2019, the Town paid off its early retirement assessment to the Middlesex County Retirement System. This provided a reduction of \$200,000 in FY

2020, that allowed the Town to reduce the total assessment by \$108,646, when taking into consideration the FY 2020 increase in our unfunded pension liability. Second, the Town was successful during collective bargaining last year in decreasing the Town's Health Insurance Cost Share from eighty (80%) percent to seventy (70%) percent over two fiscal years (FY 2019 and FY 2020). This has allowed the Town to absorb an increase in health insurance rates of seven (7%) percent, while the overall employee benefit line item decreased by 0.94%.

The following chart shows what we expect to receive in revenues for FY 2020 that can be used to fund the Proposed Operating Budget:

<u>Revenue Source</u>	<u>Actual FY 2019</u>	<u>Proposed FY 2020</u>	<u>Dollar Change</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
Property Tax**	\$ 30,650,535	\$ 31,778,998	\$ 1,128,463	3.68%
State Aid	\$ 909,717	\$ 965,342	\$ 55,625	6.11%
Local Receipts	\$ 3,993,241	\$ 4,120,480	\$ 127,239	3.19%
Enterprise Fund Reimbursement for Benefits	\$ 237,633	\$ 236,288	\$ (1,345)	-0.57%
Free Cash	\$ -	\$ 33,143	\$ 33,143	100.00%
Other Available Funds	\$ 305,000	\$ 300,000	\$ (5,000)	-1.64%
TOTAL	\$ 36,096,126	\$ 37,434,251	\$ 1,338,125	3.71%

**Includes two and one-half percent increase allowed by law and \$20 million in new growth.

There are some issues that the Finance Committee, Select Board and Town Manager would like to call to your attention as you review the Proposed Fiscal Year 2020 Operating Budget. First, the Town has seven (7) Collective Bargaining Units. Fiscal Year 2020 will be the second year of three-year agreements with all seven (7) unions. Six (6) of the Unions call for Cost of Living Adjustments of two (2%) percent, while one Agreement (Communications Union) calls for an increase of one and three quarters (1.75%) percent. As has been the Town's practice, the remaining three (3) By-Law employees receive the same adjustment as the Supervisors' Union, a wage adjustment of two (2%) percent. When you take into consideration these agreements, along with the employees that have contracts, salaries and wages will increase by \$130,088 in FY 2020. While the performance incentive program remains in effect for many of our union employees, the way it is paid in FY 2020 will change for members of the Supervisors Union. For this Union, the incentive will be paid as a one-time cash bonus and will not be added to their base when calculating the FY 2021 Cost of Living Adjustment. This will allow the Town to use Free Cash for this portion of the budget since it can be considered a one-time expense. The total amount of the Incentive Program for all Unions is \$58,581, of which \$25,123 is for Supervisor Incentives and will be paid out of Free Cash. The tax levy will cover only \$33,458 of this increase. All told, contractual salary adjustments, including performance incentives, will increase by a total of \$197,908 in Fiscal Year 2020.

Second, Debt Service in Fiscal Year 2020 is significantly different than Fiscal Year 2019. This proposed budget carries the first-year full debt service for the Senior Center. This has increased excluded debt by \$396,417 from \$865,445 to \$1,261,862, or 45.8%. Residents will see an increase in

their tax bills of approximately \$55 for this when you take into consideration a reduction in other excluded debt. The Town has also stabilized debt service within the operating budget. In Fiscal Year 2019, the Town followed a plan established in FY 2017 in which the Town temporarily borrowed funds to pay the debt service for the Lost Lake Fire Protection Project and Public Safety Radio Project. Added to the plan last year was the anticipated temporary debt service for the new Fire Department Ladder Truck. As part of this plan, instead of permanently borrowing the funds, the Town used the Excess and Deficiency Fund ("Free Cash") to pay down principal in FY 2019, with the intent of paying off the debt by Fiscal Year 2028. In Fiscal Year 2019, the Town Meeting voted to transfer \$272,946 from Free Cash for this purpose. The main purpose of this plan was to stabilize the amount of money within the tax levy at around \$250,000. The Finance Team reviews this plan each year to determine if following this plan and paying down principal with Free Cash continues to be in the best interest of the Taxpayer. When reviewing debt this year in anticipation of permanently borrowing for the Senior Center, it was determined that interest on temporary notes was getting closer to the rates charged for permanent financing. Based on this, it was decided that the time was right to permanently borrow for the Ladder Truck and Lost Lake Fire Protection, while continuing the use of Bond Anticipation Notes for the Radio Project. Due to very favorable rates on permanent financing (3.26%), the Town was able to keep in-levy debt service at around \$250,000, while reducing the need for Free Cash from \$272,946 in FY 2019 to \$98,714 in FY 2020. The following chart shows a comparison between FY 2019 and FY 2020:

		<u>FY 2019</u>		<u>FY 2020</u>
Long Term Debt - Principal Non-Excluded	\$	40,040	\$	159,250
Long Term Debt - Interest - Non-Excluded	\$	3,148	\$	87,433
Short Term Debt - Principal	\$	429,438	\$	85,714
Short Term Debt - Interest	\$	50,319	\$	13,000
Total	\$	522,945	\$	345,397
Less Free Cash Offset	\$	272,946	\$	98,714
Total Taxation for Debt Service	\$	249,999	\$	246,683

Third, at the 2018 Fall Town Meeting, due to staffing needs in the Fire Department, the Town Meeting approved the hiring of two (2) additional Firefighter/EMT's. Adding these two positions allowed the Fire Chief to assign increase coverage and provide consistency in supervision, which allowed the Department to bolster their coverage seven (7) days a week to prevent any further staffing crises that the Department experienced last summer. To pay for these additional Firefighters in both Fiscal Years 2019 and 2020, Ambulance Receipts and Meals Tax revenues were increased as offsets to the Operating Budget. While these two new Firefighter/EMTs have provided additional coverage, the Fire Department Task Force Study Committee completed its work and recommended the hiring of two (2) more Firefighter/EMTs that would allow for at least two (2) Full-time Firefighter/EMTs on duty 24 hours per day, seven days per week. The full report of the Fire Department Task Force Study Committee can be found at:

<http://townofgroton.org/Town/BoardsCommittees/FireDepartmentTaskForceStudyCommittee.aspx>

Based on this recommendation, both the Finance Committee and Select Board voted to add two additional Firefighter/EMTs to the Fire Department in Fiscal Year 2020, allowing for 24/7 Full-time Coverage. The total net cost of adding these positions in Fiscal Year 2020 is \$64,039 due to offsets in

the Proposed Operating Budgets that will no longer be needed with the addition of these two new positions. The following chart shows a breakdown of how this number was derived:

<u>Budget Impacted</u>	<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Beginning Appropriation</u>	<u>Difference</u>	<u>Cost Factors</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Fire Wages (As included in T.M. Proposed Budget)	2020	\$ 981,602			
Fire Wages (Adding 2 additional FF/EMT in FY 2020)	2020	\$ 1,045,641	\$ 64,039	2 Additional FF/EMTs	\$ 117,240
				EMT Incentive Pay (Eliminated)	\$ (60,000)
				Holiday/Stand-By Pay	\$ 17,800
				Call Firefighter/EMT Pay (Reduced)	\$ (11,001)
				Total	\$ 64,039

Finally, the Operating Assessment of the Groton Dunstable Regional School District needs to be reviewed. As stated in last year's Report, the cooperation and sharing of information between the Administration of the School Department, the Town Financial Staff, Regional School Committee, Select Board and Finance Committee continues to be strong and has allowed for the creation of a Budget that meets the needs of both the Municipal Government and School Department. That said, on December 31, 2018 and a full two months before the Regional School Committee would finalize its budget, the Town Manager's Proposed Budget had included a 5.35 percent increase in the Assessment, or an increase of \$1,081,112. This amount was used as a place holder to balance the budget and based on the five (5) year budget projection developed in Fiscal Year 2019. When the Superintendent of the Regional School District submitted the Budget to the School Committee in February, 2019, the amount of the proposed Groton Assessment was \$1,357,597, or an increase of 6.72%. While this amount would put the Town's budget out of balance, this proposed budget met the budget guidance of the School Committee and would allow the District to continue to provide a quality education to the children of Groton and Dunstable. The Regional School Committee, being a strong partner to both the Town's of Groton and Dunstable, determined that it would use a portion of its Excess and Deficiency Fund to offset the proposed assessments to both Towns, thereby reducing the Town of Groton's assessment by \$308,731, to \$21,264,294 in Fiscal Year 2020. While the use of the District's Excess and Deficiency Fund can negatively impact the Town in Fiscal Year 2021 (when this amount of money may not be available to offset the Operating Budget), the Select Board, Finance Committee and Regional School Committee have formed a Tri-Board to study both the Town's and Regional School's budgets to develop a strategy to address the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget.

Section 6-5 of the Groton Charter requires the Finance Committee to provide a report that details the differences between the Town Manager's Proposed Budget and their final Proposed Budget. The following Chart shows the differences between the budget received by the Finance Committee from the Town Manager on December 31, 2018 and the budget that will be proposed to the 2019 Spring Town Meeting:

Line	Department/Description	Original Proposed	Committee Approved
1030	Town Manager Salaries	\$ 216,997	\$ 225,163
1302	Police Expenses	\$ 216,400	\$ 213,400
1311	Fire Wages	\$ 981,602	\$ 1,045,641
1400	Nashoba Tech Operating Expenses	\$ 685,295	\$ 728,802
1410	GDRSD Operating Expenses	\$ 21,296,540	\$ 21,264,294
1610	Senior Center Van Wages	\$ 61,665	\$ 51,665
3010	Health Insurance/Employee Expenses	\$ 1,742,553	\$ 1,729,553

The following is a breakdown of the Finance Committee's Proposed Fiscal Year 2020 Operating Budget by function:

Category	FY 2019	FY 2020	Dollar Difference	Percentage Change
General Government	\$ 2,029,219	\$ 2,086,103	\$ 56,884	2.80%
Land Use	\$ 432,378	\$ 450,361	\$ 17,983	4.16%
Protection of Persons and Property	\$ 4,128,335	\$ 4,358,041	\$ 229,706	5.56%
Department of Public Works	\$ 2,193,757	\$ 2,237,722	\$ 43,965	2.00%
Library and Citizen Services	\$ 1,658,318	\$ 1,674,572	\$ 16,255	0.98%
Sub-Total - Wages and Expenses	\$ 10,442,006	\$ 10,806,799	\$ 364,793	3.49%
Debt Service	\$ 1,388,390	\$ 1,607,259	\$ 218,869	15.76%
Employee Benefits	\$ 4,074,260	\$ 4,036,106	\$ (38,154)	-0.94%
Sub-Total - All Municipal	\$ 15,904,656	\$ 16,450,164	\$ 545,508	3.43%
Nashoba Tech	\$ 557,295	\$ 728,802	\$ 171,507	30.77%
Groton-Dunstable Operating	\$ 20,215,428	\$ 21,264,294	\$ 1,048,866	5.19%
Groton-Dunstable Excluded Debt	\$ 814,080	\$ 739,429	\$ (74,631)	-9.17%
Groton-Dunstable Debt	\$ 57,181	\$ 59,533	\$ 2,352	4.11%
Groton Dunstable Capital	\$ 425,425	\$ 479,012	\$ 53,587	12.60%
Sub-Total - Education	\$ 22,069,389	\$ 23,271,070	\$ 1,201,681	5.45%
Grand Total - Town Budget	\$ 37,974,045	\$ 39,721,234	\$ 1,747,189	4.60%

The total Fiscal Year 2020 Proposed Operating Budget, including Regional School Assessments and excluded debt, is \$39,721,234 or an increase of 4.60%. This proposed budget is expected to be \$197,995 under the anticipated FY 2020 Proposition 2½ Levy Limit. When you take into consideration the proposed Capital Budget, Enterprise Fund Budgets and additional appropriations raised on the recap sheet, the total proposed budget is \$42,672,563. The Fiscal Year 2019 Tax Rate has been certified at \$18.11. Based on the Proposed Budget, the estimated Tax Rate in Fiscal Year 2020 is \$18.59, or an increase of \$0.48. In Fiscal Year 2019, the average Tax Bill in the Town of Groton (based on a home valued at \$459,000) is \$8,312. Under this proposed budget, that same homeowner can expect a tax bill of \$8,533 or an increase of \$220. The following chart shows a comparison between FY 2019 and FY 2020:

	<u>Actual</u> <u>FY 2019</u>	<u>Proposed</u> <u>FY 2020</u>	<u>Dollar</u> <u>Change</u>	<u>Percent</u> <u>Change</u>
Levy Capacity Used*	\$ 30,575,728	\$ 31,581,003	\$ 1,005,275	3.29%
Tax Rate on Levy Capacity Used	\$ 17.12	\$ 17.48	\$ 0.36	2.10%
Average Tax Bill	\$ 7,858	\$ 8,023	\$ 165	2.10%
Excluded Debt	\$ 1,775,336	\$ 2,000,028	\$ 224,692	12.66%
Tax Rate on Excluded Debt	\$ 0.99	\$ 1.11	\$ 0.12	12.12%
Average Tax Bill	\$ 454	\$ 509	\$ 55	12.12%
Final Levy Used	\$ 32,351,064	\$ 33,581,031	\$ 1,229,967	3.80%
Final Tax Rate	\$ 18.11	\$ 18.59	\$ 0.48	2.65%
Average Tax Bill	\$ 8,312	\$ 8,533	\$ 220	2.65%

*The FY 2020 Levy Limit Used includes FY 2019 unexpended tax capacity of \$76,942 and \$20 million in New Growth

The Town Manager and Finance Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank the Select Board, Town Accountant Patricia DuFresne, Town Treasurer/Collector Michael Hartnett, Principal Assessor Jonathan Greeno, Human Resources Director Melisa Doig, Executive Assistant Dawn Dunbar and all of the Departments, Boards, Committees and Commissions for their outstanding work and cooperation in assisting in the preparation of the Proposed Operating Budget. In addition, the outstanding support and cooperation by Superintendent Dr. Laura Chesson, Business Manager Michael Knight and the Groton Dunstable Regional School District Committee was extremely important in developing this budget.

The Finance Committee encourages the public to attend its meetings and contribute through asking questions, providing comments, and listening to others debate the many important financial issues before the Town today.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark W. Haddad

Groton Town Manager

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Green, Chairman

Bud Robertson

Arthur Prest

Scott Whitefield

Lorraine Leonard

David Manugian

Colby Doody

Town of Groton Finance Committee