

TOWN OF GROTON FINANCE COMMITTEE Regular Session

*Saturday, October 3rd, 2020, 9:30 a.m.
Florence Roche Elementary School Back Field
342 Main St. Groton, MA 01450*

Meeting Prior to Fall Town Meeting to take final positions on Articles

Present for Finance Committee: B. Robertson (Chair), C. Doody, D. Manugian, S. Whitefield, A. Prest, G. Green

Absent: Mary Linskey

Also Present: P. Dufresne (Town Accountant), M. Haddad (Town Manager)

Documents available at the meeting: Fall Town Meeting Motions
Article 14 Amendment Memo – Paul Funch
Minutes: 8/24/20

Mr. Robertson called the regular session of the Finance Committee to order at 9:35 a.m.

Article 2: Prior Year Bills - Ms. Dufrene explained that after the FinCom had taken their original vote on this article, three additional prior year bills were presented. These three bills were for the Election Registrars' FY20 stipends (\$150 per registrar), which had not been paid during FY20 due to an oversight. The new total for Prior Year Bills was \$610 (\$160 for Triangle Portable Services and \$450 for Registrar Stipends).

On a motion by Mr. Green, seconded by Mr. Manugian, the Finance Committee voted unanimously in favor of recommending Article 2 (as amended) to Town Meeting. The Vote: 6-0-0

Article 12: Stormwater Enterprise Budget – Mr. Robertson informed the members that since the FinCom had taken their original vote on this article, the budget had been amended from \$220,000 to \$188,800. This reflects a reduction in projected salary/benefit expenses after it was determined that hiring for this position could not occur earlier than December. Therefore, those costs were pro-rated over seven months rather than for a full year as originally budgeted. Mr. Manugian pointed out that the Town had adopted a hiring freeze during the Covid pandemic in order to control personnel costs. This would seem to conflict with that policy. Mr. Robertson agreed but noted that these costs would be paid by the Enterprise and would not be charged against the Town's operating budget.

On a motion by Mr. Green, seconded by Mr. Prest, the Finance Committee voted unanimously in favor of recommending Article 12 (as amended) to Town Meeting. The Vote: 6-0-0

Article 13: Environmental Consulting Services – Mr. Robertson said that the Building Inspector had recently evaluated the structure (including the roof) of the former Squannacook Sportsmen's Club in West Groton. The structure has been deemed safe, although some weather-proofing has been recommended. He explained that the Town does not know what amount will ultimately be spent on this project. The building must be demolished, but the lead must also be removed. If the costs are high, the project may have to be finished in a subsequent year (if private fund-raising proves to be insufficient). Mr. Green replied that if this consulting money is spent, the Town will gain a fuller understanding of what is required to deal with the site, therefore he does not oppose the spending.

The Finance Committee did not change their original position of support for Article 13.

Article 14: Complete Streets Engineering - Mr. Robertson explained that an amendment to Article 14 will be offered to Town Meeting that would increase the amount to be spent on engineering from \$35,000 (which the FinCom had previously voted to support) to \$64,000. Apparently, the engineering costs which were originally understood would cover both West Groton and Route 40/Gibbet Hill sidewalk projects, would in fact only cover the West Groton project. An additional \$29,000 would be required to engineer the Gibbet Hill sidewalk. Mr. Robertson felt that this amendment was likely to add confusion as well as cost to a warrant article that had already been debated by the Select Board and Finance Committees prior to Town Meeting. The funding request represents only the engineering portion of a project that would be constructed with State grant money. The proponents of the Article are concerned that if they do not request the full amount necessary right away, the State may discontinue the grant for future years, and the Town would lose an opportunity to improve pedestrian safety on Route 40 at Gibbet Hill. Mr. Manugian pointed out that other (less expensive) projects that had been considered for Town Meeting had been deferred, in an effort to conserve financial resources (i.e. Library Parking Lot). He is generally of the opinion that financial articles should not be considered at Fall Town Meeting unless they are considered an emergency. This one seems to have not had sufficient vetting. Mr. Green agreed and would like more information on the projects to be addressed with this grant. Mr. Whitefield said the entire funding request should be deferred; if the amendment fails, how can the FinCom support what they now know was an incorrectly presented project? Mr. Doody said he would support the original article, but not the amendment.

On a motion by Mr. Green, seconded by Mr. Manugian, the Finance Committee voted unanimously to re-consider their original position of support for Article 14. The Vote: 6-0-0

**On a motion by Mr. Green, seconded by Mr. Manugian, the Finance Committee's vote to recommend Article 14 (as originally presented in the amount of \$35,000) FAILED to carry.
The Vote: 2-4-0 (Mr. Doody and Mr. Prest voted in the affirmative)**

On a motion by Mr. Green, seconded by Mr. Manugian, the Finance Committee's vote to recommend Article 14 (as amended in the amount of \$64,000) FAILED to carry. The Vote: 0-6-0

Minutes –

On a motion by Mr. Manugian, seconded by Mr. Robertson, the Finance Committee voted unanimously to approve and release the minutes of their meeting of 8/24/20 as drafted.

At this time (9:58 am), the Finance Committee adjourned in order to attend the Fall Town Meeting beginning at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Dufresne, Recording Secretary

Patricia DuFresne

From: Patricia DuFresne
Sent: Wednesday, September 30, 2020 11:48 AM
To: Art Prest; Bud Robertson (brobertson@townofgroton.org); Colby Doody (cdoody@townofgroton.org); David Manugian (dmanugian@townofgroton.org); Gary Green (ggreen@townofgroton.org); Mary Linskey (mlinskey@townofgroton.org); Scott Whitefield (swhitefield@townofgroton.org)
Subject: FW: Notice of Amendment at Fall Town Meeting

Good Morning All,

An update for your discussion on Saturday morning.

Tricia D

From: Paul <pgfunch@verizon.net>
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 3:54 PM
To: Accountant <Accountant@townofgroton.org>
Subject: Notice of Amendment at Fall Town Meeting

I don't have Bud Robertson's email address, so please forward to him.

Bud,
I wanted to let you know that I will be offering an amendment to Article 14 (Complete Streets Engineering) to include the second project the Complete Streets Committee has obtained an estimate for. The additional design cost to the Town will be \$29,000 and the construction cost has been estimated at \$143K. This represents a nearly 500% Return-on-Investment for the Town and I think the importance of the project for a) public safety, b) business development, and c) recreational opportunities, is such that the Town Meeting should be given an opportunity to weigh in on this additional use of free cash. The amendment is simply to strike the number \$35,000 and replace it with the number \$64,000. I have already notified Jason Kauppi of my desire to amend Article 14 and I have also discussed this action with Mark Haddad.
Sincerely,
Paul

Home: 978-448-2813
Mobile: 978-302-9854

**FALL TOWN MEETING
MOTIONS
October 3, 2020**

ARTICLE 1: REMOVE "SUNDOWN TOWN"

Mover: Joshua Degen

MOTION: I move to establish from October 3, 2020 forward that Groton, Massachusetts rejects wholeheartedly the designation as a "Sundown Town", and further, that Groton, Massachusetts welcomes people of all race.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

ARTICLE 2: PRIOR YEAR BILLS

Mover: Alison Manugian

MOTION: I move that the sum of Six Hundred and Ten Dollars (\$610) be transferred from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash) for the payment of the following bills of a prior fiscal year:

Triangle Portable Services, Inc.	\$160
Jane Fry	\$150
Sally Hensley	\$150
Paul Martell	<u>\$150</u>
Total	\$610

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: 4/5's Majority

ARTICLE 3: AMEND FY 2021 TOWN OPERATING BUDGET

Mover: Joshua Degen

CONSENT MOTION ON THE BUDGET

I move that the town take affirmative action on Motion 1 through Motion 4, pursuant to Article 3, as set forth in the Town Meeting Information Handout for this Meeting, without debate and in accordance with the action proposed under each motion, provided however that if any voter requests the right to debate a specific budget motion, then said motion shall be debated and voted upon separately.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

MOTION 1: I move that the Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget, as adopted pursuant to Article 4 of the June 13, 2020 Spring Town Meeting, be amended as follows, each line item to be considered as a separate appropriation for the purposes voted:

GENERAL GOVERNMENT: By increasing the General Government Appropriation from \$2,133,418 to \$2,177,833 so as to: increase Line Item 1030 – “Town Manager Salaries” by \$4,415, from \$228,635 to \$233,050; increase Line Item 1141 – “Elections & Board of Registrars Expenses” by \$10,000, from \$12,185 to \$22,185; increase Line Item 1160 – “Insurance and Bonding” by \$20,000, from \$230,000 to \$250,000; and increase Line Item 1180 – “Postage/Town Hall Expenses” by \$10,000, from \$60,000 to \$70,000; And to transfer the sum of \$24,415 from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash), and, further, to raise and appropriate from the Fiscal Year 2021 tax levy and other general revenues of the Town the sum of \$20,000 to fund said increases.

MOTION 2: I move that the Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget, as adopted pursuant to Article 4 of the June 13, 2020 Spring Town Meeting, be amended as follows, each line item to be considered as a separate appropriation for the purposes voted:

PROTECTION OF PERSONS AND PROPERTY: By increasing the Protection of Persons and Property Appropriation from \$4,369,427 to \$4,395,632 so as to increase Line Item 1312 – “Fire Department Expenses” by \$26,205, from \$174,700 to \$200,905; And to transfer the sum of \$6,205 from the Fire & Emergency Medical Services Receipts Reserved , and, further, to raise and appropriate from the Fiscal Year 2021 tax levy and other general revenues of the Town the sum of \$20,000 to fund said increases.

MOTION 3: I move that the Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget, as adopted pursuant to Article 4 of the June 13, 2020 Spring Town Meeting, be amended as follows, each line item to be considered as a separate appropriation for the purposes voted:

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS: By increasing the Department of Public Works from \$2,254,853 to \$2,294,853 so as to increase Line Item 1552 – “Solid Waste Disposal Tipping Fees” by \$40,000, from \$135,000 to \$175,000; And to transfer the sum of \$20,000 from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash), and, further, to raise and appropriate from the Fiscal Year 2021 tax levy and other general revenues of the Town the sum of \$20,000 to fund said increases.

MOTION 4: I move that the Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget, as adopted pursuant to Article 4 of the June 13, 2020 Spring Town Meeting, be amended as follows, each line item to be considered as a separate appropriation for the purposes voted:

LIBRARY AND CITIZEN’S SERVICES: By decreasing the Library and Citizen Services from \$1,719,650 to \$1,695,650 so as to: decrease Line Item 1701 – “Groton Country Club Wages” by \$15,000 from \$144,000 to \$129,000; and decrease Line Item 1702 – “Groton Country Club Expenses” by \$9,000, from \$136,000 to \$127,000.

ARTICLE 4: AMEND WAGE & CLASSIFICATION SCHEDULE Mover: Rebecca Pine

MOTION: I move that the Wage and Classification Schedule as adopted pursuant to Article 3 of the 2020 Spring Town Meeting be amended as printed in the Warrant for the 2020 Fall Town Meeting.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

ARTICLES 5, 6 & 7 CONSENT MOTION

Mover: Tom Orcutt

I move that the town take affirmative action on Articles 5, 6, & 7, pursuant to the motions as set forth in the Town Meeting Information Handout for this Meeting, without debate and in accordance with the action proposed under each motion, provided however that if any voter requests the right to debate a specific motion, then said motion shall be debated and voted upon separately.

ARTICLE 5: TRANSFER - WATER ENTERPRISE FUND

MOTION: I move that the sum of \$160,000 be transferred from the Water Enterprise Fund Surplus to the Fiscal Year 2021 Water Enterprise Department Budget for general expenses.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

ARTICLE 6: TRANSFER - CENTER SEWER ENTERPRISE FUND

MOTION: I move that the sum of \$50,000 be transferred from the Center Sewer Enterprise Fund Surplus to the Fiscal Year 2021 Center Sewer Enterprise Department Budget for general expenses.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

ARTICLE 7: TRANSFER - FOUR CORNERS SEWER FUND

MOTION: I move that the sum of \$5,000 be transferred from the Four Corners Sewer Enterprise Fund Surplus to the Fiscal Year 2021 Four Corners Sewer Enterprise Department Budget for general expenses.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

ARTICLE 10: TRANSFER - GDRSD CAP STAB FUND

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

Mover: John Giger

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

Mover: John Giger

Total: \$220,000

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

Mover: Alison Manugian

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

ARTICLE 14: COMPLETE STREETS ENGINEERING**Mover: John Giger**

MOTION: I move that the sum of Thirty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$35,000) be transferred from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash), to be expended by the Town Manager, for the purpose of professional engineering services for the design of traffic safety and pedestrian improvements funded by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts "Complete Streets" program.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

ARTICLE 15: ASSESSORS CYCLICAL INSPECTIONS**Mover: Alison Manugian**

MOTION: I move the sum of Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000) be raised and appropriated from the FY 2021 tax levy and other general revenues of the Town, to be expended by the Town Manager, for the purpose of conducting the cyclical inspection process of inspecting every property in town within the Department of Revenue's five-year period guidelines.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

ARTICLE 16: CPA FUNDING ACCOUNTS**Mover: Bruce Easom**

MOTION: I move that the following sums be appropriated from the Community Preservation Fund and allocated to the following sub accounts:

CPC Operating Expenses:	\$ 5,000
Open Space Reserve:	\$ 78,490
Historic Resource Reserve:	\$ 78,490
Community Housing Reserve:	\$ 78,490
Unallocated Reserve:	\$544,430

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

ARTICLE 17: CPA FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS**Mover: Bruce Easom****CONSENT MOTION ON CPA FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS**

I move that the Town take affirmative action on Motion 1 through Motion 7, under Article 17, as recommended by the Community Preservation Committee, and as set forth in the Town Meeting Information Handout for this Meeting, without debate and in accordance with the action proposed under each motion, provided however that if any voter requests the right to debate a specific motion, then said motion shall be debated and voted upon separately.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

MOTION 1: Lost Lake/Knops Pond Restoration

I move, pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44B, Section 5, that the sum of Ninety-Five Thousand Dollars (\$95,000) be appropriated from the Community Preservation Fund Unallocated Reserve to fund Community Preservation Application 2021-02 "Lost Lake/Knops Pond Restoration".

MOTION 2: Conservation Fund

I move, pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44B, Section 5, that the sum of Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000) be appropriated from the Community Preservation Fund Open Space Reserve and the sum of Two Hundred Nineteen Thousand Dollars (\$219,000) be appropriated from the Community Preservation Fund Unallocated Reserve for a total of \$221,000, to fund Community Preservation Application 2021-03 "Conservation Fund".

MOTION 3: Portrait Restoration

I move, pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44B, Section 5, that the sum of Eleven Thousand Four Hundred Dollars (\$11,400) be appropriated from the Community Preservation Fund Historic Resource Reserve to fund Community Preservation Application 2021-04 "Portrait Restoration".

MOTION 4: Library Pocket Doors

I move, pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44B, Section 5, that the sum of Ten Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$10,500) be appropriated from the Community Preservation Fund Historic Resource Reserve to fund Community Preservation Application 2021-06 "Library Pocket Doors".

MOTION 5: Hazel Grove

I move, pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44B, Section 5, that the sum of Nine Thousand Two Hundred Forty-Two Dollars (\$9,242) be appropriated from the Community Preservation Fund Open Space Reserve to fund Community Preservation Application 2021-07 "Hazel Grove".

MOTION 6: WWI Cannon Restoration

I move, pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44B, Section 5, that the sum of Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$15,000) be appropriated from the Community Preservation Fund Historic Resource Reserve to fund Community Preservation Application 2021-10 "WWI Cannon Restoration".

MOTION 7: Emergency Rental Assistance

I move that the Town vote, pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44B, Section 5, that the sum of Two Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$200,000) be appropriated from the Community Preservation Fund Community Housing Reserve to fund Community Preservation Application 2021-14 "Emergency Rental Assistance".

ARTICLE 18: SPECIAL LEGISLATION

Mover: Rebecca Pine

MOTION: I move to petition the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to enact special legislation authorizing the Treasurer of the Town of Groton, notwithstanding section 54 of chapter 44 of the General Laws or any other general or specific law to the contrary, to invest the Town's Trust Funds pursuant to the standards of the Massachusetts Prudent Investor Act, codified in Chapter 203C of the General Laws as set forth in the Warrant for the 2020 Fall Town Meeting.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

ARTICLE 19: AMEND ZONING – SITE PLAN REVIEW

Mover: Russ Burke

MOTION: I move that the Code of the Town of Groton, Chapters 218-2.5, 218-9.3, 218-9.3.A., 218-93.B.(1) and 218-9.3B.(2) be amended as set forth in the Warrant for the 2020 Fall Town Meeting.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: 2/3's Majority

ARTICLE 20: AMEND ZONING – ATTACHED ACCESSORY

Mover: Tim Svarzkopf

MOTION: I move that the Code of the Town of Groton, Chapters 218-9.4.1 and 218-9.4.2 be amended as set forth in the Warrant for the 2020 Fall Town Meeting.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: 2/3's Majority

ARTICLE 21: AMEND ZONING – DETACHED ACCESSORY

Mover: George Barringer

MOTION: I move that the Code of the Town of Groton, Chapter 218-9.4.3 be amended as forth in the Warrant for the 2020 Fall Town Meeting.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: 2/3's Majority

ARTICLE 22: AMEND CHAPTER 128 – DOGS

Mover: Rebecca Pine

MOTION: I move that the Code of the Town of Groton be amended by deleting Chapter 128, "Dogs" in its entirety and replacing it with a new Chapter 128, "Dogs", as set forth in the Warrant for the 2020 Fall Town Meeting.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

ARTICLE 23: ACCEPT RED PEPPER LANE

Mover: Rebecca Pine

MOTION: I move that Article 23 be indefinitely postponed.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority
