

TOWN OF GROTON FINANCE COMMITTEE

Regular Session

Florence Roche Elementary School Back Field
342 Main St., Groton, MA 01450
Saturday, May 1st – 8:30 am (Prior to Spring Town Meeting)
Minutes Approved 7/12/21

Members present: Bud Robertson, Chairman; Gary Green, Vice Chair; Colby Doody; David Manugian; Scott Whitefield; Mary Linskey, Art Prest

Others present: Patricia Dufresne, Town Accountant

Chairman Bud Robertson called the meeting to order at 8:35 AM.

Employee Salary Freeze – Mr. Prest said that he would like the FinCom to consider reviewing policies and establishing priorities for Town spending. He explained that he is concerned that key employees (whose wages have been frozen for FY22) will accept more lucrative offers from other municipalities and will end up leaving Groton. The group briefly discussed this topic, with Mr. Robertson saying that he agreed with Mr. Prest in general, however employment decisions are often based on personal reasons beyond just financial reward. He suggested discussing this further if additional funding becomes available.

Minutes:

On a motion by Mr. Manugian, seconded by Mr. Whitefield, the Finance Committee voted in the majority to approve and release the minutes from their meeting of 3/9/21 as drafted. **The Vote: 6-0-1** (Mr. Prest abstained)

Mr. Robertson asked about the status of the February minutes. Ms. Dufresne replied that she believes they were previously approved and released, but will double-check her records. On a motion by Mr. Prest, seconded by Mr. Manugian, the Finance Committee voted unanimously to approve and release the minutes from their meeting of 3/29/21 as drafted. **The Vote: 7-0-0**

On a motion by Mr. Manugian, seconded by Mr. Prest, the Finance Committee voted unanimously to approve and release the minutes of their meeting of 4/12/21 as drafted. **The Vote: 7-0-0**

Article 12 – Easement for Sewer Connection 227 Boston Rd: The members had previously voted 5 in favor of this article and 2 deferred until Town Meeting. Arguing that this is not primarily an article with financial impact (FinCom usually takes *no position* on sewer connection/extension articles), the members who had previously deferred taking a position, voted to abstain. Final Vote: 5-0-2

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Article 14 Motion D – CPC AHT Site Assessment Study: The members had all previously deferred taking a position on this article until Town Meeting. Ms. Linskey explained that she had done additional research into the project since their last meeting. She had discovered that the proposal was broader and more comprehensive than she had previously believed, and therefore she was now comfortable with the spending level proposed. Additionally, there is a chance that the Town could lose access to state matching funds if this is delayed. Mr. Prest still believes that the proposal does not provide enough specific details as to how the \$75,000 will be spent. Mr. Green agreed that there is further work that needs to be done before the money should be transferred to the AHT. On a motion by Mr. Manugian seconded by Mr. Prest, the Finance Committee voted AGAINST recommending Article 14 Motion D to Town Meeting. **The Final Vote was 3-4-0.**

Article 14 Motion I - Conservation Fund Transfer: Mr. Prest pointed out that Town Meeting was going to be asked to transfer another \$350,000 to the Conservation Fund for future land purchases, while much of the Conservation Land that already exists in Groton is not properly maintained. Mr. Robertson replied that this situation was likely to continue. The Town of Groton places a priority on preserving open spaces; unfortunately, funding for routine land maintenance is harder to come by. Some of these responsibilities have been taken over by Parks for recreation purposes, but it is an issue.

Mr. Robertson formally adjourned the meeting of the Finance Committee at 8:50 am, and the members proceeded to join the Spring Town Meeting scheduled to begin at 9:00 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Dufresne

Town Accountant & Recording Secretary,

Town of Groton