

SELECT BOARD/FINCOM MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, MARCH 13, 2023
163 WEST MAIN STREET

Approved 3/29/23

SB Members Present: John Reilly, Chair; Rebecca H. Pine, Vice Chair; Matthew F. Pisani, Clerk; Alison S. Manugian

SB Members Arrived Late: Peter S. Cunningham

SB Absent: none

FinCom Members Present: Bud Robertson, Mary Linskey, Gary Green, Colby Doody, David Manugian, Scott Whitefield

Also Present: Mark Haddad, Town Manager; Kara Cruikshank, Executive Assistant; Dr. Laura Chesson, GDRSD Superintendent; Nik Gualco, Conservation Administrator; Tom Orcutt, Water Superintendent; Robert Rafferty

Mr. Reilly called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and reviewed the agenda. Mr. Reilly said the meeting is being held at The Center due to the elevator being broken at Town Hall. Mr. Cunningham will be arriving late to the meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Robertson called the Finance Committee to order at 7:01 pm.

Mr. Robertson announced Mr. Whitefield and Mr. Manugian will be arriving late to the meeting.

Ms. Pine said she spoke with the Town Clerk and knew Ms. Dunbar would not be in attendance at the beginning of the meeting. Ms. Pine offered to make the following announcement on behalf of Ms. Dunbar: There will be an election in May. There are a number of positions in our Town government that no one has taken out papers for. Ms. Pine said our Town government functions because a lot of people volunteer their time and services. The positions are as follows: Board of Health, (1) three-year term; Park Commission, (2) three-year terms; Planning Board, (1) three-year term; Sewer Commission, (1) three-year term; Groton Dunstable Regional School Committee, (1) three-year term; and the Groton Housing Authority, (1) five-year term. The deadline to take out papers is Friday, March 31st, at 5:00 pm and the deadline to return the paperwork is Tuesday, April 4th by 5:00pm. You are required to have at least 50 registered voter's signatures on the papers in order to be on the ballot. Ms. Manugian said as a quick reminder, that Voter Sign and Go is being held at the Prescott School on Saturday between 10am and 12pm if you are trying to get signatures.

Mr. Haddad said Town Hall will have a remote day tomorrow due to the impending storm.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

TOWN MANAGERS REPORT

1. Review PFAS issue at the Groton Dunstable Regional School District High School –

Temporary Water Supply – Permanent solution

Mr. Haddad provided an update of the PFAS issue at the Groton Dunstable Regional School District High School. Mr. Haddad said he held a meeting this week to review both temporary and permanent solutions. He said originally, they were under the impression from the Department of Environmental Protection that they would need to bring in clean water to the site on a temporary basis while a permanent solution was developed and permitted. Mr. Haddad said they may be able to continue with bottled water until a permanent solution is in place. He said they are seeking clarification on that issue. There are two potential solutions to bring clean water to the site. One option is to bring water from the Groton Water Department and the other option would be to bring water from the Town of Dunstable through the Town of Pepperell. Environmental Partners, the Town's Engineers, were in attendance at the meeting to help answer any questions. Article 12 on the Spring Town Meeting Warrant is seeking funding for the permanent solution for Groton. Mr. Haddad said the Town is working diligently to find a solution.

Ms. Pine said to keep everyone up to date, she recalls when this was discussed as a Board, the Board was inclined to keeping it within Groton. Ms. Pine asked for a quick summary as to why we would consider Dunstable.

Mr. Haddad said we are trying to come up with the most cost-effective solution working with the Engineers and the School District. Dunstable has no PFAS in their water. Mr. Pisani asked if the water comes from Dunstable, will it just go to the high school and the affected Dunstable dwellings? Also, if it comes from Groton will residents be able to tie into it. Mr. Haddad said yes, this would be the case. He said we will take care of the houses affected in Dunstable and if the water comes from Groton, residents could tie into it. Ms. Manugian asked if there is a plan in place and will we be able to irrigate at the schools? Groton Dunstable Regional School District Superintendent, Dr. Chesson was in attendance. Dr. Chesson said water will be trucked in to eliminate PFAS while irrigating. She also explained the School District's Engineers, Tighe and Bond, provided written documentation that they had soil sample testing recently and the fields are safe to have students play on them. Soil samples from the other fields do not show any more PFAS than the football field, so it is believed the irrigation is what is causing it. Mr. Haddad said when they come up with a solution they will talk about cost, potential grants, intermunicipal agreements, and an agreement with the GDRSD to bring clean water to the site. There will be a full recommendation with the costs and plans shown. Mr. Haddad said the solutions will show how we came up with all the recommendations for the board, residents and for the tax payers to see.

Mr. Cunningham arrived at the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

2. Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Development Update

The School Committee voted to adopt the original Proposed Budget of the Superintendent, with the following assessment to the Town of Groton for FY 2024:

Operating Assessment:	\$26,800,655
Capital Assessment:	\$ 542,257
Debt Assessment:	<u>\$ 465,796</u>
Total Assessment:	\$27,808,707

Mr. Haddad said the Town has sufficient funding set aside to cover the Capital and Debt Assessment. Regarding the Operating Budget, Mr. Haddad has provided to the Select Board and the Finance Committee a Proposed Operating Assessment of \$25,937,716. The Proposed Operating Budget is out of balance by \$862,939. Based on the anticipated Health Insurance rate for the school district (5.9% versus the 15%) along with the preliminary Chapter 70 proposal from the Governor, the Assessment proposed last week by the Superintendent (subject to review and approve by the School Committee) is \$26,312,387. This would put the proposed budget out of balance by \$374,671. The School Committee and Superintendent committed to working with the Town to balance the budget by March 29th. The Finance Committee did not vote to finalize their budget at their meeting last week.

Mr. Haddad stated that this is the current budget situation and it will be discussed further during the Warrant Public Hearing later in the meeting.

3. Update on Select Board Meeting Schedule Through 2023 Spring Town Meeting

Monday, March 20, 2023	- No Meeting
Monday, March 27, 2023	- Continuation of Public Hearing on Mail in Voting at ATM
Monday, April 3, 2023	- Finalize the FY 2024 Town Operating Budget
Monday, April 10, 2023	- Approve Warrant for Posting
Monday, April 17, 2023	- No Meeting (Patriot's Day)
Monday April 24, 2023	- Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Saturday, April 29, 2023	- 2023 Spring Town Meeting

ITEMS FOR SELECT BOARD CONSIDERATION AND ACTION

1 Consider request to extend Earth Removal Certificate of Exemption until April 11, 2025 for the Florence Roche Elementary School Construction Project.

Mr. Haddad stated that last April the Select Board approved a Certificate of Exemption for the removal of up to 55,000 cubic yards of fill in conjunction with the construction of the new Florence Roche Elementary School. The Certificate is set to expire on April 11, 2023. The project is not yet completed. Gilbane is requesting a two-year extension of the Certificate.

Ms. Pine made a motion to extend the Earth Removal Certificate of Exemption until April 11, 2025. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion and carried unanimously.

Ms. Pine asked why the Certificate of Exemption was only granted for one year? Ms. Collette, Stormwater Inspector, said this was only granted for one year because this is in the Select Board regulations, but they are the Select Board Regulations so they can grant an extension for a longer duration.

OTHER BUSINESS

Consider Ratifying the Town Manager's Appointment of Thomas Peisel as a Full Member to the ZBA.

Mr. Haddad said there is a Vacancy on the Zoning Board of Appeals for a Full Member due to a recent resignation. The ZBA is about to embark on a 40B Application for 500 Main Street. Thomas Peisel is

currently an Associate Member. Mr. Haddad asked the Board to appoint Thomas Peisel as a Full Member to the Zoning Board of Appeals, term to expire of June 2023.

Mr. Cunningham made a motion to appoint of Thomas Peisel as a full Member to the ZBA. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

WARRANT PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. Haddad read the public hearing notice into the record.

Ms. Manugian moved to open the public hearing. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Mr. Robertson moved to open the public hearing. Mr. Doody seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Mr. Haddad began the review of the warrant.

Article 1: There were no questions on Article 1.

Article 2: Elected Officials Compensation- Mr. Haddad said this Article will set the salary for the Moderator for FY 2024. The Town Moderator is proposed to receive a salary of \$1,000. Ms. Manugian asked when did it get raised from \$65 to \$1000? Mr. Haddad said he put it in his budget proposal for FY 2024.

Article 3: Mr. Haddad said this Article is for the three Bylaw employees. There were no questions.

Article 4: Appropriate FY 2024 Contribution to the OPEB Trust- In FY 2024, the anticipated amount necessary for this purpose is estimated to be \$185,000. This Article will seek an appropriation of \$185,000 from Free Cash to add to the OPEB Liability Trust Fund.

Mr. Haddad said Articles 1-4 will be done as a consent motion.

Article 5: Fiscal Year 2024 Annual operating budget- Mr. Haddad reviewed his FY 2024 Budget Development Update from his Town Managers Report earlier so everyone could review/see the numbers. The School Committee Chair, School Superintendent and Business Manager were all present to answer questions.

He provided a Proposed Operating Assessment of \$25,937,716. He said we still have a budget out of balance by \$862,939. If we take into consideration some of the saving the School District will realize in Health Insurance, minimum contribution and the State Aid, the number could be \$26,312,387. He said we still have a proposed budget out of balance by \$374,671 after putting \$400,000 back into the school district budget.

Mr. Haddad wanted to try to clarify any confusion on the numbers. He said when the Select Board and Finance Committee met on Saturday, March 4th, he presented \$400,000 worth of cuts and the school presented their cuts. Dr. Chesson said at that meeting if we bump up the Assessment to \$400,000, that

would be ok. Mr. Haddad said this would bring the proposed School Assessment to \$25,937,716. Dr. Chesson said the current Proposed Operating Assessment is \$26,312,387. Mr. Robertson said when the Finance Committee met, some of the members asked why the numbers didn't go down when the balance went down to \$374,671. Mr. Robertson said our original deal was 41% (the Town) and 59% (the school). Mr. Robertson would like to see a list of the school cuts and would like to discuss them.

Dr. Chesson said she sent Mr. Haddad a list of cuts. Dr. Chesson said the cuts were slightly above what was needed and agreed upon. She said looking at the positions, she was asked of which positions are critical etc. Anything that happens needs to go to contingency and she said every year they go lower on contingency. Dr. Chesson said they could do it, but it's tight but could do it with the \$400,000 Assessment. Ms. Manugian said she needs to understand what items are being proposed for removal from the budget and if she is ok with them. Mr. Haddad explained the numbers that he proposed in the budget from last week's meeting remain the same and he has not deviated from that number.

Dr. Chesson read aloud the list of cuts that was emailed over for clarification. Mr. Haddad asked if the Town sets aside \$25,937,716 and Dunstable can match their percentage, would they would be in the position to meet their share or would we need an override. Dr. Chesson read off a list of concerns; Elementary librarians that were previously restored would need to be replaced with a para-professional and they do not have the list of classes yet, to name a few. The School Committee has not voted on any of these proposed reductions, but she feels they are the cuts with the least impact to students.

Ms. Pine suggested that the Town should stick with the proposed increase of \$400,000 for the School's Assessment.

Mr. Haddad would like to put the Firefighter and Dispatcher back into the budget.

Mr. Green said we need to see what the School Committee is going to approve and mentioned the fact that the Finance Committee has not voted to approve the budget as of yet. Mr. Haddad suggested a Joint Meeting with School Committee, Finance Committee and Select Board as soon as possible to discuss this. Dr. Chesson said these cuts are on the School Committee's agenda on March 22nd. They need to discuss this first. Mr. Green suggested the chairs find a time and date to meet as soon as possible.

Article 6: Fiscal Year 2024 Capital Budget- Mr. Haddad said the Capital Budget items are listed in the Warrant Article and have been recommended by the Capital Planning Committee.

Mr. Cunningham thought the Police Chief said the hazmat storage locker is not absolutely necessary. Mr. Haddad said this is the one thing the Chief could go without, if we had to come up with one time revenue reductions.

Article 7: Mr. Haddad said this Article creates a stabilization fund for revenues received from the opioid settlement. The money could be spent for opioid related issues.

Mr. Cunningham asked can the money there be an offset for the school? Mr. Haddad said it would have to be opioid related.

Article 8: The Destination Groton Committee was in attendance to present. Ms. Joni Parker Roach and Mr. Sheldon said they have been working diligently to put together a marketing strategy. They are requesting a budget increase to \$30,000 from \$15,000. Mr. Sheldon said they would like to do more and are pursuing a series of grants that will have matching funds. They will be bringing a grant agreement from the MRPC for Board approval. Based on this, they believe they can reduce their request to \$15,000.

David Manugian asked if they expect this to be an annual appropriation. Mr. Sheldon said yes.

Article 9: Funding for Sustainability Commission- Mr. Francisco was in attendance. Mr. Francisco said three months ago they came before the Select Board with a presentation. They talked about the pollinator garden and the tire recycling. The work around the garden will continue, the recycling program will continue. The additional funding request of \$15,000 will be split around the greenhouse gas emission study, the pollinator garden, the tire recycling, and educational seminars. Mr. Green asked if have they attempted to look at other funding avenues? Mr. Francisco said Grant opportunities are available as Ms. Pine gave us some leads.

Article 10: Amend the Charge of the Sustainability Committee- Mr. Haddad said the Select Board can change the charge but only through a vote of Town Meeting. The purpose of this Article is to have Town meeting delegate that authority to the Select Board.

Article 11: Election Equipment Purchase- Poll Pads- Town Clerk, Dawn Dunbar was in attendance. Ms. Dunbar is looking for \$13,600 to purchase eight poll pads. She said this will expedite things as we go into an election. They will enable voters to check in at any location and they will reduce the number of election workers, which will be a cost savings on the budget. Currently, over 200 communities are using them. We can more efficiently upload our data into the State Registration System.

Article 12: Water Superintendent, Tom Orcutt said this is an out of cycle application where we can apply for emergency funds for the PFAS issue at the High School. Mr. Orcutt said this gets the ball rolling and does not lock us into anything. Mr. Sulprizio asked how much could be funded. Mr. Orcutt believed \$450 million could be available in state funding. This could be 0% for an interest rate, principal forgiveness and grants. We are not sure how much it will be for at this time.

Article 13 and 14- CPC have a public hearing tonight Mr. Haddad said. He will be invited them to the next meeting.

Article 15: An Act Merging Certain Voting Precincts in the Town of Groton- Ms. Dunbar was in attendance. This would authorize the Select Board to petition the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for a special act that would merge Precincts 1 and 3A into one Precinct known as Precinct

1. This would allow us to eliminate one Precinct. A few election workers would be eliminated. Ms. Collette really hopes this will work. There is a lot of confusion. She urges everyone to support this.

Article 16: Amend Town Charter- This is an administrative function to improve efficiency. according to Mr. Haddad said. Ms. Pine suggests it should say the Town Manager and one Select Board member as a "check and balance."

Ms. Manugian asked if it could be signed digitally. Mr. Haddad said he could look into the digital signatures. Mr. Reilly likes the idea of the digital feature. Ms. Pine said the Board is elected to oversee the person that they hire and would like to continue to have at least one member sign.

Article 17: Amend Town Charter- Mr. Haddad stated that the Charter Committee had changed the original Charter to have the Town Manager nominate, instead of appoint, members to various Boards and Committees. An unintended consequence of this change was that now the Town Manager would have to bring a removal to the Board in public. This could cause embarrassing situations. Mr. Haddad explained how this happened recently. He would like to avoid this and return to the original Charter language when it comes to appointments. Ms. Pine suggests she would like it to say the decision to remove someone from a committee will be made in conjunction with the Select Board Chair. Mr. Cunningham said it's from the appointment from a Town Manger so he does not think a member of the Select Board member needs to be involved. Ms. Manugian said she is comfortable with the way it is now.

Article 18: Mr. Haddad said Town Counsel brought this forward. Mr. Haddad held a dog hearing recently. Based on the evidence, he ordered a dog to be humanely euthanized. The Current Bylaw allows for an additional appeal of the Hearing Officer's Order to the Select Board before appealing to the Clerk Magistrate. Town Counsel is recommending to remove the intermediate step.

Mr. Haddad asked the Select Board to vote to open the Warrant.

Ms. Pine moved to open the Warrant. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Mr. Haddad asked the Select Board to vote to add the Warrant Article.

Mr. Cunningham moved to add Warrant Article 18. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Mr. Haddad asked the Select Board to vote to close the Warrant.

Ms. Manugian moved to close the Warrant. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Article 19: Amend Zoning Bylaw- Takashi Tada, Town Planner, was in attendance. Takashi said he would like to amend section 218-3 and amend zoning bylaw section 218-9.4.

Mr. Reilly questioned why 800 square feet for a detached structure? Takashi said the 800 square feet was already the size for an attached structure so the Planning Board wanted to keep the attached and detached the same.

Article 20: Extend sewer district to 100 Whitman road- The Public Hearing will be held on March 29th for the Sewer Commission to take a position. This will be a direct line under the Country Club to 100 Whitman Road.

Article 21: Grant Easement for Sewer Connection for 100 Whitman Road- To allow the easement under the Country club. The Public Hearing will be held on March 29th with the Sewer Commission.

Article 22: Conservation Land Purchase- Nik Gualco, Conservation Administrator, was in attendance. He said the Conservation Commission received a grant this year for the purchase of the former Casella Property. A Town Meeting vote is needed to complete the purchase.

Article 23: Grant Conservation Restrictions on Various Parcels- Mr. Gualco said that part of the Grant acceptance identified in Article 22 required placing conservation restrictions on various Town owned land. This Article would place those restrictions on 17 of those parcels. Ms. Pine said she understands the concept of the Article but the wording on the Article is confusing. She suggests the draft to be cleaned up for people to understand.

Article 24: Grant Conservation Restriction to Division to of Fisheries and Wildlife- The Select Board is in control of this 103+ acre parcel known as the Brown Loaf Parcel (Groton Assessor Parcel 234-04). The Article would allow the Town to recoup most of the funds it spent to purchase the property while allowing the Conservation Commission and DFW the means to preserve a parcel with significant ecologic value.

Article 25: Citizens' Petition- Rezone 797 Boston Road- Proponent is in attendance- Mr. Donald Van Dyne was in attendance. This Article is to see if the town will vote to rezone 797 Boston Road from residential (RA) to neighborhood Business (NB) to allow an indoor pickleball facility. There will be a public hearing with the Planning Board on April 13th. More public outreach was required because the Planning Board wanted more public outreach before they would recommend the Article to Town Meeting. This was why this Article was passed over last Fall. Mr. VanDyne is going to send abutters notifications within 500 sq ft. of the parcel. Ms. Manugian said for this parcel to be rezoned she wants to be rest assured it will remain one building and not developed into other lots for other uses. The structure will be 36,000 square feet in size. Ms. Pine asked if he anticipates coming back to tie into the sewer. Mr. VanDyne said possibly. Mr. Cunningham said the sooner you start he outreach in the community the better. Mr. Cunningham suggested renting out The Center.

Article 26-34 will be part of a Consent Agenda- Ms. Pine asked why the Debt Service for the Middle School Track is listed separately and not with the other CPC Articles? Mr. Haddad said because it is an Annual Appropriation similar to the way the Town handled the Surrenden Farm Debt.

Ms. Pine asked if we plan on inserting anything in the Warrant about moving toward electronic voting.? Mr. Haddad is working with the Moderator and there will be an insert to the front of the Warrant about this process.

Mr. Haddad asked the Boards to close the Public Hearing on the Warrant.

Ms. Manugian made the motion to close the Public Hearing on the Warrant. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Doody made the motion to close the Public Hearing on the Warrant. Mr. Green seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes from March 6, 2023

Ms. Pine made a motion to approve the minutes of the regularly scheduled meeting from March 6, 2023 as presented. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

The Select Board meeting was adjourned at 9:19pm.

The Finance Committee remained in session to take positions on Town Meeting Articles. (Please see attached spreadsheet for vote tabulations).

Respectively submitted by Kara Cruikshank, Executive Assistant to the Town Manager

SpringTown Meeting (04/29/2023)

Finance Committee Positions on Articles votes taken : 3/13/2023

Y-N-Def

Article #	Description	Dollar Amount	Moved	Seconded	Bud R	Colby D	Gary G	Dave M	Mary L	Mike S	Scott W	Total Vote
1	Hear Reports	N/A										N/A
2	Elected Officials Comp (Moderator)	1,000	Gary Gree	Bud Roberts	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	6-0
3	Wage & Classification Schedule		Gary Gree	Bud Roberts	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	6-0
4	FY24 OPEB Trust Contribution F.C.	185,000	Gary Gree	Bud Roberts	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	6-0
5	FY24 Operating Budget	49,505,757										
6	FY24 Capital Budget		Gary Gree	Bud Roberts	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	6-0
A	Ambulance 1 Replacement BAN	442,900										
B	Fire Command Vehicle	70,000										
C	DPW Loader FY24	220,000										
D	IT Infrastructure	50,000										
E	Municipal Building Repairs	25,000										
F	DPW Building Maintenance Van	60,000										
G	Parks Property Improvements	25,000										
H	Police Cruisers FY24 (2)	125,142										
I	Hazmat Storage Evidence Locker	40,000										
J	Golf Carts FY23 2nd of 5 payments	25,000										
K	Driving Range Improvements	50,000										
L	Greens Equip 5 yr lease (1st Pay)	10,000										
7	Opioid Sp Purpose Stabilization Auth		Gary Gree	Bud Roberts	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	6-0
8	Destination Groton Funding	15,000										
9	Sustainability Commission Funding	15,000	Mary Linsk	Colby Doody	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes		Yes	4-2
10	Amend Charge of Sustainability Comm.											N/A
11	Election Equip Poll Pads	13,600	Gary Gree	Bud Roberts	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	6-0
12	Water Main Const for GDRSD PFAS	10,000,000	Gary Gree	Bud Roberts	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	6-0
13	CPC Funding Accounts	1,069,910										

Article #	Description	Dollar Amount	Moved	Seconded	Bud R	Colby D	Gary G	Dave M	Mary L	Mike S	Scott W	Total Vote
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14	CPA Project Recommendations											
A	Housing Trust Transfer	200,000										
B	Preservation of Lake Massapoag	4,000										
C	Conservation Trust Transfer	400,000										
D	Rebuild Baseball Diamond	80,000										
E	Softball Diamonds Cutler Field	90,000										
F	GHA Site Engineering Feasibility	120,000										
G	Housing Coordinator Position	55,857										
H	Squannacook River Rail Trail (4)	90,000										
15	Merge of Voting Precincts 1/3A	N/A										N/A
16	Charter Amendment Warrant Signature Authority	N/A										N/A
17	Charter Amendment Dept Head Appointment	N/A										N/A
18	Amend General Bylaw Dog Hearings	N/A										
19	Amend Zoning Bylaw Accessory Apartments	N/A										N/A
20	Conservation Land Purchase	601,500	Gary Gree	Bud Roberts	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	6-0
21	Conservation Restrictions Various	N/A										N/A
22	Conservation Restriction Division of Fisheries & Wildlife	N/A										N/A
23	Citizens Petition: Rezone Boston Rd	N/A										N/A
24	Trf E&D Water Enterprise FY23	75,000	Gary Gree	Bud Roberts	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	6-0
25	Trf E&D Sewer Enterprise FY23	100,000	Gary Gree	Bud Roberts	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	6-0
26	Trf E&D 4 Corners Enterprise FY23	75,000	Gary Gree	Bud Roberts	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	6-0
27	Trf E&D Cable Enterprise FY23	10,000	Gary Gree	Bud Roberts	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	6-0

Article #	Description	Dollar Amount	Moved	Seconded	Bud R	Colby D	Gary G	Dave M	Mary L	Mike S	Scott W	Total Vote
28	Free Cash for Prior Year Bills											
29	FY23 Line Item Transfers	80,355										
30	Offset Snow & Ice Deficit FY23	130,000										
31	CPC Track Debt Service Amendmt	(800,000)	Gary Green	Bud Roberts	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	6-0
32	CPC Track Debt Service FY24	55,000										
34	Est Limits for All Revolving Funds		Gary Green	Bud Roberts	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	6-0
	Total from Raise & Appropriate											
	Total from CPC Funds	1,039,857										
	Total from Free Cash 04/29/2023	407,631										
	Total from Enterprise Receipts	260,000										
	Free Cash Certified 9/2022	2,115,125										
	Free Cash Committed 10/2022	1,287,050										
	Free Cash Committed 4/2023	407,631										
	Free Cash Bal. Remaining	420,444										

Warrant, Summary, and Recommendations

TOWN OF GROTON



2023 SPRING TOWN MEETING

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

Beginning Saturday, April 29, 2023 @ 9:00 AM

Attention – Voters and Taxpayers

Please bring this Report to Town Meeting

**THE BUDGET HANDOUT FOR ARTICLE 5 IS AVAILABLE
IN THE BACK OF THE WARRANT**

Introduction to Groton Town Meeting

Voters are familiar with casting ballots in local and state elections, but they have another important civic duty in towns, the Town Meeting.

What is Town Meeting?

The Town Meeting is the legislative body in the town form of government in Massachusetts. Town Meeting is a formal gathering of registered voters who propose, debate and vote on measures. Groton holds at least two Town Meetings per year.

What is a warrant?

The warrant is the official notice to voters that a Town Meeting is scheduled. The warrant includes the date, time, location and a description of each subject to be acted on at Town Meeting. In Groton, the warrant must be posted in two public places and mailed to each household 14 days in advance of Town Meeting. “The warrant must contain a sufficient description of what is proposed so as to constitute an adequate warning to all the inhabitants of the town.”¹ “Every action taken at the meeting must be pursuant to some article in the warrant and must be within the scope of such article.”²

How does Town Meeting proceed?

Voters attending Town Meeting must first check in with the clerks and receive a voting card which is required to vote. The meeting typically acts on the articles in the order they are printed in the warrant. For each article, a main motion is made and seconded by voters and placed by the moderator on the floor for debate. Permission of the moderator is required to speak. The moderator presides and regulates the proceedings, decides all questions of order, and calls and declares all votes. After debate has ended, the moderator will call for a vote by a show of voter cards. If the vote is too close to call by sight or if seven voters immediately question the moderator’s declaration of the vote, the moderator will order a hand count to confirm the vote.

¹ *Town Meeting Time: A Handbook of Parliamentary Law* (page 12) Johnson, Trustman and Wadsworth, Third Edition, 2001.

² *Id.*

Who can attend?

Town Meeting is open to the public. Only Groton voters are entitled to attend, speak and vote. Non-voters may be required to sit in a separate section. Non-voters may ask the moderator to speak on the topic of the debate.

How long is town meeting?

Town Meeting concludes when all articles on the warrant have been acted upon. Town Meeting may conclude in one session or adjourn for subsequent sessions.

Explanation of a Consent Agenda

A consent agenda is a procedure to group multiple main motions into a single motion for voting. A consent agenda saves time by eliminating the reading of multiple motions and explanations when there are no objections or questions. In Groton, a consent agenda generally consists of articles unanimously supported by the Select Board and Finance Committee. Articles that change by-laws or introduce new spending are typically not included. In this warrant, the Select Board has grouped articles in consent agendas and labeled them for easy reference.

How Consent Agendas Work

As the first step to act on a consent agenda, the moderator will read the titles of the included articles. A voter who wishes to remove an article from the consent agenda for separate debate and vote should state "hold." The held article will be set aside and acted on after the vote on the consent agenda. After the meeting agrees on the contents of the consent agenda, there will be no debate and the moderator will immediately call for a vote. Every motion included in the consent agenda will either pass or fail as a group. Voters should read the warrant and review the proposed consent agendas to identify articles they wish to remove for separate consideration.



Town Meeting Access for Voters with Disabilities

Parking – Universally accessible parking spaces are available in the parking lot in front of the Groton Dunstable Middle School South. There is a ramp providing access from the parking lot to the front door of the Middle School.

Wheelchair Accessible & Companion Seating – Wheelchair spaces, seating for people with mobility issues and companion seats are available in the center aisle on both sides of the auditorium.

Sign Language – A Sign Language Interpreter will be provided for the hearing impaired, upon request, at least one week prior to the meeting.

Speaking at Town Meeting – There will be volunteers available to bring hand-held microphones to voters who have mobility issues or cannot stand in line and wait at the microphones.

Restrooms – Accessible restrooms are available near the entrance to the auditorium.

Transportation to Town Meeting - The Council on Aging van will be available to Groton residents attending Town Meetings at no charge. All riders will be at the meeting prior to the start. The van is wheelchair accessible. Your reservation can be made by calling the Senior Center at 978-448-1170. Seats will be filled on a first come, first serve basis.

Questions or concerns - If you or a member of your household has questions or would like to request a sign language interpreter, please contact the Select Board's Office at Town Hall at 978 448-1111 at least one week before the Town Meeting.

SPRING TOWN MEETING WARRANT
APRIL 29, 2023

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 Saturday, the twenty-ninth day of April, 2023 at Nine O'clock in the morning, to consider all business other than the election of Town Officers and on the twenty-third day of May, 2023, between the hours of 7:00 A.M. and 8:00 P.M., at an adjourned session thereof at the following locations:

Precincts 1 & 3A	The Groton Center	Precincts 2 & 3	Middle School North Gymnasium
	163 West Main Street		346 Main Street

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 One	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	2 Years
Vote for Two	Planning Board	3 Years
Vote for One	Sewer Commission	3 Years
Vote for Two	Trustees of the Groton Public Library	3 Years
Vote for One	Trustee of the Groton Public Library	1 Year
Vote for One	Water Commission	3 Years
Vote for One	Groton Housing Authority	5 Years

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*Will be presented as one Consent Motion

**The Budget will be presented as one Motion

***Annual Consent Agenda. To be presented as one Motion

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:

Finance Committee:

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 set the compensation for the elected officials of the Town for the ensuing year, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Summary: *To provide compensation for elected officials as proposed by the Town Manager. The Town Moderator is proposed to receive a salary of \$1,000 in FY 2024.*

Article 3: Wage and Classification Schedule

To see if the Town will vote to amend and adopt for Fiscal Year 2024 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:

Finance Committee:

Summary: *The purpose of this Article is to set the wage and classification schedule for the three (3) employees (Executive Assistant to the Town Manager, Human Resources Director and IT Director)*

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 2% cost-of-living adjustment in Fiscal Year 2024.

Article 4: *Appropriate FY 2024 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 Chapter 32B, Section 20, of the Massachusetts General Laws, or to take any other action relative thereto.

***Select Board
Town Manager***

**Select Board:
Finance Committee:**

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 2024, the anticipated amount necessary for this purpose is estimated to be \$185,000. This Article will seek an appropriation of \$185,000 from Free Cash to add to the OPEB Liability Trust Fund.*

Article 5: *Fiscal Year 2024 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 (2024), 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 Finance Committee's and Town Manager's Report which includes the Finance Committee's and Select Board's recommendations.*

Article 6: Fiscal Year 2024 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 in Fiscal Year 2023 and thereafter, for the purpose of funding the Fiscal Year 2024 Capital Budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER

Summary: *The following is the proposed Town Manager's Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2024:*

Item #1 – Ambulance 1 Replacement	\$105,951	Fire and EMS
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Summary: *Ambulance 1 will be due for replacement in 2024. The cost of the Ambulance is approximately \$435,000. To pay for this ambulance, the Town will borrow the total amount through State House Notes and pay it back over 5 years. In Fiscal Year 2024, the Town will appropriate \$108,511 from the EMS Fund to pay the first year's Debt Service.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Item #2 – Command Vehicle	\$70,000	Fire and EMS
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Summary: *In FY 2024, the Command Vehicle to be replaced is the vehicle that the Deputy Chief uses for emergency response and management of incidents.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Item #3 – Dump Truck**\$45,000****Highway**

Summary: *In Fiscal Year 2021, Town Meeting approved a bond for \$185,000 to purchase a new Dump Truck for the Highway Department, with the intent to pay it back over five years. The appropriation this year is the third of five payments for this truck.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Item #4 – Loader**\$220,000****Highway**

Summary: *The current loader is a 1995 model and is 25 years old. This is an important piece of equipment for the Highway Department as it performs many functions, including snow removal operations. This should be considered a scheduled replacement.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Item #5 – IT Infrastructure**\$50,000****Town Facilities**

Summary: *This item in the Capital Budget was established eleven years ago and has been very successful. In Fiscal Year 2024, the following items will be purchased/upgraded with this allocation: 10 replacement computers; Replace aging servers and storage arrays; Investment to expand the network and keep equipment and maintenance costs current; and network switch upgrades and increased wireless coverage and improve door lock and security system maintenance.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Item #6 – 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 the Town's building infrastructure. Priorities continue to change when it comes to the minor repairs and upgrades in the municipal buildings. Furnaces, a/c units, flooring and painting are some of the small items this capital program handles.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Item #7 – Building Maintenance Van**\$60,000****Town Facilities**

Summary: *This Van is used by the DPW's Maintenance Foreman to carry tools and other necessary items used in the maintenance of our buildings. The current van was purchased used (2003) four years ago and needs to be replaced. This is a vital and necessary vehicle for the maintenance of Town Facilities.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Item #8 – Property Improvements**\$25,000****Park Department**

Summary: *The Park Commission has been working over the past several years developing a strategy to address deficiencies in the various Park Department Properties located throughout Groton. By appropriating \$25,000 each year, the Park Commission can develop a capital improvement program that will allow them to keep our various park locations in good shape and avoid a major construction project.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Item #9 – Police Cruisers**\$125,142****Police Department**

Summary: *Purchase of two police cruisers and related equipment to replace cruisers that are no longer cost effective to maintain. This allows for lesser mileage per year, better maintenance scheduling, assignment of cars to officers and for a programmed replacement schedule that ensures line cars are rotated out at reasonable mileage and wear. Un-marked cars are rotated in the same fashion.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Item #10 – Hazmat Storage Evidence Locker**\$40,000****Police Department**

Summary: *A secure twelve by twenty Out Building for the purpose of securing hazardous evidence (narcotics and flammables) as well as large items of evidence. The out building will need to have a concrete foundation and floor. The building wall will be on block construction. The overhead and wall through doors will be of industrial grade steel construction.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Item #11 – Golf Carts**\$25,000****Country Club**

Summary: *In FY 2023, the Town replaced the fleet of twenty-five golf carts with new 21 Yamaha gas powered carts and four Yamaha electric carts using a five year lease to purchase agreement at an annual cost of approximately \$25,000. This is the second of five payments.*

Select Board:**Finance Committee:****Item #12 – Driving Range Improvements****\$50,000****Country Club**

Summary: *This item will pay for the replacement of driving range mats, addition of range targets, addition of poles and netting on the right side of the range, as well as, addressing drainage issues throughout the range which prevents maintenance in those areas.*

Select Board:**Finance Committee:****Item #13 – Greens Equipment****\$10,000****Country Club**

Summary: *The Country Club needs to replace aging greens equipment. Some pieces age better than others and the maintenance staff attempt to use all the equipment until repairing it becomes cost prohibitive. The greens superintendent and course mechanic will determine the items needed most. The Town will enter into lease purchase agreements for the equipment and pay it off over five years.*

Select Board:**Finance Committee:**

Town Manager

Article 7: Revenue Dedication of Opioid Settlements to Special Purpose Stabilization Fund

To see if the Town will vote pursuant to Chapter 40, Section 5B, of the Massachusetts General Laws, to establish a special purpose stabilization fund, known as the Opioid Settlement Stabilization Fund, for money received from judgments or settlements in litigation or claims against opioid manufacturers or distributors, to be expended for all of the purposes allowed by law, including those outlined in applicable opioid litigation settlement documents and consistent with any state guidelines or regulations further clarifying allowable uses of opioid litigation settlement funds; and further, to see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of the fourth paragraph of said Section 5B to dedicate all or

a percentage, which may not be less than 25 percent, of the money received from judgments or settlements in litigation or claims against opioid manufacturers or distributors to the special purpose stabilization fund established under this Article, effective for Fiscal Year 2023 beginning on July 1, 2022; and further, to transfer from Free Cash the amount of such judgments or settlements received by the Town to date to the special purpose stabilization fund established under this Article; or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Summary: *The Town of Groton is eligible to receive up to \$19,295 in Opioid Abatement funds pursuant to settlements reached between the Attorney General and companies and individuals that allegedly fueled the opioid crisis. 40% of the payments to be received by the state, will be directly passed on to its political subdivisions. The allocation of abatement funds will be made over a period of 17 years, ending in 2038. These funds can only be used by the Town for very specific purposes, namely opioid abuse prevention, harm reduction, treatment and recovery. Accordingly, in order to give municipalities time to strategize how best to meet their community's needs, as well as aid in the long-term tracking, spending and reporting requirements, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is permitting towns to create a special purpose stabilization fund to which this revenue can be dedicated. To date, Groton has received \$4,990.48 of Opioid Settlement funds that will be transferred into the special purpose stabilization fund if it is authorized.*

Article 8: *Funding for Destination Groton Committee*

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 2023 and thereafter, for the purpose of providing funding for the Destination Groton Committee to carry out the Charge of the Committee and all costs associated and related thereto, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Destination Groton Committee

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Summary: *The purpose of this Article is to provide funding for the Destination Groton Committee to carry out its charge, which is to pursue a course of action intended to engage all Town stakeholders, including the business and non-profit communities, Town leaders, and Town residents in a series of public information forums in order to prepare for an increase in visitors to town while at the same time work to preserve its rural small-town charm. A portion of this funding will be used to hire consultants to assist in procuring grant funding to create tourism programing, strategic marketing, infrastructure and regional transportation mitigation.*

Article 9: *Funding for Sustainability Commission*

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 providing funding for the Sustainability Commission to carry out the Charge of the Committee and all cost associated and related thereto, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Sustainability Commission

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Summary: *The purpose of this Article is to provide funding for the Sustainability Commission to pay for their tire recycling program, pollinator garden program and provide educational materials to residents in their endeavor to have informational/educational seminars that focus on Sustainability. At the direction of the Select Board in October, 2021, the Sustainability Commission added climate change and resilience to their purview. Beginning in 2022, the Commission added climate change work projects and a tire recycling program to their ongoing pollinator garden program. Continuing and bringing these projects to fruition requires funding. The Commission is seeking \$15,000 for the above-mentioned activities in FY 2024.*

Article 10: Amend the Charge of the Sustainability Commission

To see if the Town will vote to amend Article 20 of the April 28, 2008 Spring Town Meeting which created the Sustainability Commission by authorizing the Select Board, in conjunction with the Sustainability Commission, to create a new Charge of the Commission, including the number of members of the Commission and length of terms, and authorize the Select Board to amend said Charge and Membership from time to time as the Board deems appropriate at a duly posted meeting of the Select Board, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Select Board
Sustainability Commission

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: *The Sustainability Commission has been in existence for the past 13 years operating under the original Charge and membership as voted by the 2008 Spring Town Meeting. Sustainability has taken on a more and more important role in today's world. The focus of the Commission needs to be able to adapt to changing priorities. Unfortunately, since the Commission and Charge were voted on by Town Meeting, only Town Meeting can amend it. This can cause a delay in addressing issues. The purpose of this Article is to authorize the Select Board, working with the Sustainability Commission, to draft a Charge that can be amended from time to time by the Select Board. In addition, at the direction of the Select Board in October, 2021, the Sustainability Commission added climate change to their purview. Members were added to the Commission to work on this initiative. At present, the Commission is at maximum capacity, with one alternative member temporarily authorized. However, the work involved requires additional flexibility in the membership and the expertise members can bring.*

Article 11: Election Equipment Purchase – Poll Pads

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 purchase Poll Pads for use by the Town Clerk to check-in voters at all elections and Town Meetings, and all costs associated and related thereto, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Clerk
Town Manager

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: *The use of Poll Pads will help to accelerate the check-in process at Town Meetings and at Elections by taking the place of the paper check-in system we currently use. These tablets will allow the election worker to look up the voter by manually entering the first few letters of the voters first and last name or but scanning the bar code on the back of a driver's license or state issued ID. If an ID is scanned, the Poll Pad matches the name and birth date of the person on the voter list with the name and date of birth it reads from the bar code. At Town Meetings, voters will have the ability to check-in at any staffed station as the Poll Pads automatically sync to one another via Bluetooth connectivity and not Wi-Fi, which eliminates any chance of checking in more than once. The Town Clerk's Office staff will also be able to electronically record voter turnout totals, load voter history into the State Voter Registration System post-election and run essential reports in a more time efficient manner. Over 200 cities and towns in the Commonwealth are currently utilizing this technology.*

Article 12: Construct New Water Main to Address PFAS Issue at GDRSD High School

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate a sum or sums of money for the purposes of financing the planning, designing, permitting, and constructing of a new water main from the Groton Water Distribution System to the Groton-Dunstable Regional High School and on Kemp Street and Groton Street in Dunstable and a portion of North Street in Groton in order to bring potable drinking water to the School and private homes, required for the treatment of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in said water supply sources, and all incidental and related costs, including without limitation all costs thereof as defined in Section 1 of Chapter 29C of the Massachusetts General Laws; to determine whether this appropriation shall be raised by borrowing or otherwise; or to take any other action relative thereto.

Select Board

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Summary: *This Article is for the extension of municipal drinking water to the Groton Dunstable Regional High School and the surrounding properties in Dunstable on Groton Street and Kemp Street and on North Street in Groton. In 2021, the drinking water source was tested for PFAS/PFOS as required by the MassDEP. Measured levels at the High School were well over the Mass DEP's limits for potable drinking water and the drinking water source was removed from service. It appears that the surrounding properties have also been impacted by the PFAS contamination at the High School. A new water source for the High School and surrounding properties is necessary to address this issue. The estimated cost of this project is \$9 million. The Town is seeking all available Federal and State Grants to offset the cost of this water main extension.*

Article 13: 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:	\$
Open Space Reserve:	\$
Historic Resource Reserve:	\$
Community Housing Reserve:	\$
Unallocated Reserve:	\$

or to take any other action relative thereto.

Community Preservation Committee

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Community Preservation Committee:

Summary: *This is an accounting procedure that is necessary so that the Community Preservation Committee will have access to the funds raised during Fiscal Year 2024. Except for the CPC Operating Expenses, none of these funds will be spent without additional approval at Town Meeting.*

Article 14: 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 2024, 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 Massachusetts 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 Massachusetts 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 Trust Funds Request	\$200,000
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Summary: *This application is seeking \$200,000 in CPA funds to be used to help the Affordable Housing Trust meet its affordable housing goals. This application is requesting that the funding be transferred to the Affordable Housing Trust to be used for any and all allowable community housing purposes. Community housing funds can be used to acquire, create, support and rehabilitate and / or*

restore housing if acquired or created with CPA funds. The Trust would plan to submit a CPC application each year to be considered for CPA funding. The full amount to be paid from the Community Housing Reserve.

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Community Preservation Committee:

CPC Proposal B:	Preservation of Lake Massapoag	\$4,000
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Summary: *This application is requesting \$4,000 in CPA funds to cover a portion of the 2023 rehabilitation/preservation costs for the Upper Massapoag Pond. The pond is currently overrun by invasive aquatic plants and the eighteen-acre cove portion of the pond located in Groton has added significant costs to the treatment. Both the Town of Tyngsboro and the Town of Dunstable have been supporting this project since it first started. The full amount to be paid from the Unallocated Reserve.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Community Preservation Committee:

CPC Proposal C:	Conservation Fund – FY 2024	\$400,000
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Summary: *The Conservation Commission is requesting \$400,000 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. In the past, the Conservation Fund has been used to purchase Conservation Restrictions, Agricultural Preservation Restrictions, and fee ownership of conservation land in the Town. The Commission adheres to the Select Board's General Financial Guideline #6, which states the goal "to maintain a balance in the Conservation Fund of at least 2% of the Town's current line-item budget." However, due to the rising cost of land and the current number of properties the Commission is anticipating closing on in 2023, the need to augment the Fund is as crucial this year as ever. As of the January 1, 2023 the Conservation Fund balance is \$1,691,087. It should be noted that of this amount, \$635,000 represents a gift earmarked for the conservation of a specific parcel in the coming year. The full amount to be paid from the Unallocated Reserve.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Community Preservation Committee:

CPC Proposal D: Rebuild Major League Baseball Diamond \$80,000

Summary: *The Park Commission is requesting \$80,000 in CPA funds to replace an existing baseball field located at Town Field (behind the Library) that has served the Town since the 1930's. The funds will be used towards excavating and removing infield grass and clay. The excavated area will then be laser graded in which the layout will meet the major league diamond standards. A new home plate, pitcher's mound, and left and right foul poles will be set. An irrigation only well will be drilled for irrigation purposes only. An irrigation system will be installed for the benefit of the entire playing surface. An electrical service will be installed in the existing maintenance shed. The full amount to be paid from the Open Space Reserve.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Community Preservation Committee:

CPC Proposal E: Construct Softball Diamonds at Cutler Field \$90,000

Summary: *The Park Commission is requesting \$90,000 in CPA funds to build over the site of the former Little League regulations diamonds at Cutler Field in West Groton. The funds will be used towards excavating and removing infield grass and clay. The excavated area will then be laser graded in which two softball diamonds will be constructed in adherence with the proper guidelines and standards. This project will include all necessary materials required to construct the two softball diamonds. The full amount to be paid from the Unallocated Reserve.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Community Preservation Committee:

CPC Proposal F: Conceptual Site Engineering Costs \$120,000

Summary: *The Groton Housing Authority is requesting \$120,000 in CPA funds to cover the estimated costs associated with preparing applications for the Nashua Road Project (Parcel 227 / 135). This project requires a full scope of testing and engineering in order to determine whether the land is feasible for the purposes of generating eight affordable rental units designated for 55 and over. The process will begin with soil testing as per the conceptual plan. However, should the soil be contaminated, unsuitable or too expensive to mitigate, the project will terminate. The full amount to be paid from the Community Housing Reserve.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Community Preservation Committee:

CPC Proposal G: Housing Coordinator – FY 2024

\$55,791

Summary: *This application is requesting \$55,791 in CPA funding from the Community Housing category to fund the wages and benefits of the Housing Coordinator position (25-hours/week). The full amount to be paid from the Community Housing Reserve.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Community Preservation Committee:

CPC Proposal H: Squannacook River Rail Trail

\$90,000

Summary: *Squannacook Greenways is requesting \$90,000 in CPA funding for construction of Phase 4 of the Squannacook River Rail Trail (SRRT) from the northern Crosswinds Drive crossing of the MBTA Railroad right of way to the Groton/Townsend town line for a total distance of .25 miles. Construction of the SRRT is being conducted in phases due to environmental permitting requirements which limit construction activity to a period of between 11/15-3/15. Squannacook Greenways is also relying on DCR MassTrails grants to underwrite a large portion of construction costs and has been the successful recipient on three MassTrails grants: 2019, 2020 and 2022. Squannacook Greenways will be applying for the next round of grants and if successful will commence construction in 11/2023. The full amount to be paid from the Open Space Reserve.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Community Preservation Committee:

Community Preservation Committee

Article 15: An Act Merging Certain Voting Precincts in the Town of Groton

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to petition the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for a special act that would merge Precincts 1 and 3A into one Precinct known as Precinct 1 as follows:

An Act Merging Certain Voting Precincts in the Town of Groton

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

Section 1. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, Precinct 1 and Precinct 3A in the Town of Groton shall merge and become Precinct 1 of the Town of Groton.

Section 2. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

provided, however, that the General Court may make clerical or editorial changes of form only to the bill, unless the Select Board approves amendments thereto before enactment by the General Court, which amendments shall be within the public purposes of said petition; or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Clerk
Town Manager

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: *In 2021, and as a result of the 2020 Federal Census, boundary lines for Precincts 1 and 3 were adjusted due to shifts in population. The new boundary lines took effect on December 31, 2021 and are in effect for 10 years. During the 2021 process, the Massachusetts Legislature pre-empted the timeline used for reprecincting, and started redistricting simultaneously. The 2010 precinct boundaries were used to redistrict which affected part of Precinct 3. Because of this, the Town now has a sub-precinct, which you will see referred to as Precinct 3A and the Town was split the Town into two (2) Representative Districts, the First Middlesex District and 37th Middlesex District. There are currently 236 Residents residing with the newly formed Precinct 3A. This article seeks Town Meeting permission to request Special Legislation to merge Precinct 3A into Precinct 1. This merger will yield a cost savings to the Town as it would require less support during elections.*

Article 16: Amend Town Charter – Article 3, Section 3.2.2 (v)

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to petition the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for a special act that would amend the Groton Town Charter as follows:

An Act Relative to the Charter in the Town of Groton

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same as follows:

Section 1. The charter of the town of Groton, which is on file in the office of the archivist of the commonwealth as provided in section 12 of chapter 43B of the general laws, is hereby amended by striking out section 3.2.2(v) and inserting in place thereof the following:

3.2.2(v) sign all payroll and expense warrants; provided, however, that the select board, at its sole discretion, may delegate this authority to the town manager by a vote of the board at a posted meeting.

Section 2. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

provided, however, that the General Court may make clerical or editorial changes of form only to the bill, unless the Select Board approves amendments thereto before enactment by the General Court, which amendments shall be within the public purposes of said petition; or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Summary: *The signing of the payroll and accounts payable warrants is the responsibility of the Select Board, as identified in M.G.L. Chapter 41, Section 56. This responsibility serves as an oversight on the town treasury. On a bi-weekly basis, the warrants are delivered, usually with a large number of detailed expense and payroll items. Individual Select Board Member practices vary with respect to their detailed review of the warrants. It is recommended that the Charter be revised to authorize the Select Board to delegate the authority, at their discretion, to sign expense and payroll warrants to the Town Manager. The Select Board can also revoke this delegation and impose limits on signing authority.*

Article 17: *Amend Town Charter – Article 4, Sections 4.2(iii) and 4.2(iv)*

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to petition the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for a special act that would amend the Groton Town Charter as follows:

An Act Relative to the Charter in the Town of Groton

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same as follows:

Section 1. The charter of the town of Groton, which is on file in the office of the archivist of the commonwealth as provided in section 12 of chapter 43B of the general laws, is hereby amended by striking out section 4.2(iii) and 4.2(iv) and inserting in place thereof the following:

4.2(iii) appointing and removing department heads, officers and subordinates and employees and other appointed members of town government for whom no other method of appointment or removal is provided in this charter or by-law. Appointments made by the town manager shall be confirmed by the select board within 15 days of the date the town manager files notice of the action with the select board. Failure by the board of selectmen to confirm an appointment within 15 days shall constitute rejection of the appointment.

Section 2. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

provided, however, that the General Court may make clerical or editorial changes of form only to the bill, unless the Select Board approves amendments thereto before enactment by the General Court, which amendments shall be within the public purposes of said petition; or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Summary: The Charter Committee in 2017 amended the original Town Charter's appointing authority of the Town Manager by creating a cumbersome, unnecessary procedure of nominating appointments to the Select Board, instead of having the Town Manager appoint members of Town Government, subject to the ratification of the Select Board. It was a change that was not necessary, as the Select Board still has the ultimate authority on who serves Town Government. They also changed the authority of the Town Manager to remove members of Town Government without the approval of the Select Board at a duly posted public meeting. This has the potential to embarrass volunteers and cause unnecessary drama. This proposal would return the appointing authority of the Town Manager back to the original wording in the Charter that was approved in 2008 and worked without issue or complaint for many years.

Article 18: Amend General Bylaws – Dog Hearings

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Code of the Town of Groton, Chapter 128, Dogs, by amending Section 128-3, Enforcement, as follows (deleted text in ~~striketrough~~, new text underlined):

- H. Appeals. The Hearing Authority's ~~initial~~ decision shall become effective upon filing said decision with the Town Clerk with notice to the owner or keeper. ~~The owner or keeper of a dog may appeal the initial decision of the Hearing Authority to the Select Board within 10 days of the decision being filed with the Town Clerk. The Select Board shall review the decision in open session and determine whether or not to modify or uphold the decision. The Select Board may conduct a further hearing or accept additional evidence as the Board deems appropriate.~~ An owner or keeper may further appeal the ~~Select Board's final action~~ Hearing Authority's decision to the district court pursuant to MGL c. 140, § 157.

or take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Summary: Town Counsel has advised that this internal appeal process deviates from state law and gives appellants technical arguments that may jeopardize the Town's decisions on appeal. State law affords dog owners a mechanism to appeal the Town's dog hearing decisions in district court, with an initial hearing before a district court magistrate that often resolves most matters without the need for a full trial.

Article 19: Amend Zoning Bylaw – Accessory Apartment Clarifications

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

1. In Section 218-3 Definitions, amend the existing definition of Accessory Apartment by deleting the words “one bedroom” and inserting in their place the words “eight hundred (800) square feet of habitable floor area”.
2. Amend Section 218-9.4 Accessory Apartment as follows:
 - a. In Section 218-9.4.2 Attached Accessory Apartment, by inserting the words “of habitable floor area” in the first sentence after the words “eight hundred (800) square feet”.
 - b. In Section 218-9.4.2.k, by inserting the word “attached” in the first sentence before the words “accessory apartment”.
 - c. In Section 218-9.4.3 Detached Accessory Apartment, by deleting the words “detached-accessory apartment” in the first sentence and inserting in their place the words “detached accessory apartment not to exceed eight hundred (800) square feet of habitable floor area”.
 - d. In Section 219-9.4.3.a, by deleting the words “and j-l” and inserting in their place the words “j, and l”.

or to take any other action relative thereto.

Planning Board

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Planning Board:

Summary: *This article clarifies certain inconsistencies in the provisions regulating Attached and Detached Accessory Apartments in Section 218-9.4. Specifically, this article clarifies that all accessory apartments, whether attached or detached, shall have a maximum of 800 square feet of living area (i.e., habitable floor area). This article also modifies the definition of Accessory Apartment to be consistent with Section 218-9.4 by inserting the maximum living area provision.*

Article 20: Extend Center Sewer District to Include 100 Whitman Road

To see if the Town will vote to extend the “Groton Center Sewer District” as established by the vote of the Special Town Meeting of February 6, 1989, under Article 7, and as shown most recently on the plan approved under article 14 of the Annual Town Meeting of April 25, 2005, to include the

property shown on Assessor's Map 234 Lot 55-1 (100 Whitman Road), and further described in a Deed recorded with the Middlesex South District Registry of Deeds in Book 80620, Page 135, and its successors or assigns, and provided that all costs of designing, laying, and construction of the extension and any associated connection and the cost of additional capacity and the property owner's proportionate share of the general benefit facilities, Connection Fees, and all other costs associated therewith, are paid by the owner of the property benefited thereby, whether by the assessment of betterments or otherwise, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Board of Sewer Commissioners

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Board of Sewer Commissioners:

Summary: *This Article, if approved, will extend the Center Sewer District to 100 Whitman Road (Assessors Map 234 Lot 55-1). Please note that the parcel shown on Assessors Map 234 Lot 55, which is used as an apple orchard, is not included in this article. Under Groton's Charter, placing an article on the Warrant requires a sponsor, either a Department, Board or Committee of Town or by Citizens' Petition. In an effort to allow the Town Meeting to take action on this request, the Board of Sewer Commissioners has agreed to place this Article on the Warrant on behalf of the proponent.*

Article 21: *Grant Easement for Sewer Connection for 100 Whitman Road*

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to grant an easement for the purpose of placing and maintaining a subsurface sewage disposal line to the owner of the real property located at 100 Whitman Road (Assessors Map 234 Lot 55-1), and further described in a deed recorded with the Middlesex South District Registry of Deeds in Book 80620, Page 135, and only that parcel, said easement to pertain to the area below existing grade surface and under the surface of Town-owned real property under the control of the Select Board located at 94 Lovers Lane (Assessors Map 115, Parcel 34), and further described in a deed recorded with the Middlesex South District Registry of Deeds in Book 20265, Page 302, known as the Groton Country Club, said easement being shown on the plan labeled "Easement for Sewer Connection for 100 Whitman Road" on file with the Office of the Town Clerk, on terms and conditions the Select Board deems to be in the best interest of the Town, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Board of Sewer Commissioners

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Board of Sewer Commissioners

Summary: *Should a sewer extension to 100 Whitman Road (Assessors Map 234 Lot 55-1) be authorized by town meeting, the extension will be a private connection and will not extend beyond the confines of what is currently 100 Whitman Road (Assessors Map 234 Lot 55-1). The work will be done using directional drilling from the site of the existing house lot and is not expected to result in surface disturbance except for a small area at the point of connection to the town sewer at the edge of the golf course across from Johnson's Restaurant. The easement would run along the eastern edge of the 6th fairway. The owner of 100 Whitman Road (Ryan J. McGuane) will pay for the cost of construction and connecting to the existing sewer line. It is anticipated there will be no cost to the Town of Groton for the connection and maintenance. In an effort to allow the Town Meeting to take action on this request, the Board of Sewer Commissioners has agreed to place this Article on the Warrant as well.*

Article 22: *Conservation Land Purchase*

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate from the Town's Conservation Fund the sum of \$601,500, for the purpose of acquiring for conservation and passive recreation purposes, by eminent domain, negotiated purchase, or otherwise, certain real property known as the "Casella Property", consisting of 119 acres, more or less, owned by the Casella Realty Trust as shown on a plan entitled "Plan of Land in Groton, Massachusetts" prepared by Dillis & Roy Civil Design Group, dated 03/01/2023, which is on file in the Town's Conservation Commission Office, said parcel to be acquired by the Conservation Commission and held under the provisions of Chapter 40, Section 8C, of the Massachusetts General Laws; and further, to authorize the Conservation Commission to file on behalf of the Town any and all applications deemed necessary for grants and/or reimbursements under Chapter 132A, Section 11 and/or any other applicable statute for said acquisition; and further, to authorize the Conservation Commission to enter into all agreements and execute any and all instruments on behalf of the Town as may be necessary for said acquisition; and further, to authorize the Select Board and the Conservation Commission to grant a conservation restriction with respect to said parcel to a qualified entity under terms and conditions the Select Board and the Conservation Commission deem to be in best interest of the Town and in accordance with M.G.L. c. 184, Sections 31 through 33; or to take any other action relative thereto.

Conservation Commission

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Summary: *Applying for a state grant will enable the Town to leverage funds already set aside in the Conservation Fund for the acquisition of approximately 119 acres of conservation land. The Conservation Commission is able to spend from the Conservation Fund without Town Meeting approval, however, the Commission needs approval to receive reimbursement from the grant. The negotiated purchase price for this property is \$601,500 and the grant would reimburse approximately \$360,900 (approx. 60% of total project cost) to the Conservation Fund. This land has frontage on Nashua Road*

and is adjacent to the Reedy Meadow Conservation Area to the south, and the GDRSD High School property to the east. In addition to providing an extensive trail connection between Chicopee Row, Reedy Meadow Road, and Nasua Road, the Casella Property features exceptionally diverse habitats for its size. It is the last parcel of land with such habitats within the ring of development from Reedy Meadow Road to the south, Nashua Road to the west, Wyman Road to the north, and the Groton-Dunstable Regional High School to the east. Protecting large tracts of contiguous open space ensures a diversity of wildlife, habitats, and recreational opportunities for generations of Groton residents.

Article 23: Grant Conservation Restrictions on Various Parcels

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board and the Conservation Commission to grant conservation restrictions with respect to all or a portion of the parcels of land described below, upon such terms and conditions as the Select Board and the Conservation Commission deem to be in the best interest of the Town and in accordance with Chapter 184, Sections 31 through 33, of the Massachusetts General Laws:

1. To the Groton Conservation Trust, the parcel of land located off Chicopee Row (Groton Assessor's Parcel 231-85.1) described in a deed to the Town of Groton recorded with the Middlesex South District Registry of Deeds on June 27, 2011, in Book 57046 at Page 248;
2. To the Groton Conservation Trust, the parcel of land located off Chicopee Row (Groton Assessor's Parcel 231-94) described in a deed to the Town of Groton recorded with the Middlesex South District Registry of Deeds on December 18, 1997, in Book 27992 at Page 315;
3. To the Groton Conservation Trust, the parcel of land located off Hawtree Way (Groton Assessor's Parcel 231-63) described in a deed to the Town of Groton recorded with the Middlesex South District Registry of Deeds on October 24, 1997, in Book 27801 at Page 119;
4. To the Groton Conservation Trust, the parcel of land located off Chicopee Row (Groton Assessor's Parcel 231-95) described in a deed to the Town of Groton recorded with the Middlesex South District Registry of Deeds on July 13, 1973, in Book 12477 at Page 130;
5. To the Groton Conservation Trust, the parcel of land located off Martins Pond Road (Groton Assessor's Parcel 243-17) described in a deed to the Town of Groton recorded with the Middlesex South District Registry of Deeds on December 31, 1986, in Book 17744 at Page 99;
6. To the Groton Conservation Trust, the parcel of land located off Martins Pond Road (Groton Assessor's Parcel 244-26) described in a deed to the Town of Groton recorded with the Middlesex South District Registry of Deeds on December 31, 1986, in Book 17744 at Page 99;
7. To the Groton Conservation Trust, the parcel of land located off Sawtell Drive, Groton, Middlesex County, Massachusetts (Groton Assessor's Parcel 232-9) described in a deed to the Town of Groton recorded with the Middlesex South District Registry of Deeds on December 2, 2003, in Book 41544 at Page 397;
8. To the Groton Conservation Trust, the parcel of land located off Sawtell Drive (Groton Assessor's Parcel 232-14) described in a deed to the Town of Groton recorded with the Middlesex South District Registry of Deeds on December 2, 2003, in Book 41544 at Page 397;

9. To the Groton Conservation Trust, the parcel of land located off Kailey's Way (Groton Assessor's Parcel 232-38) described in a deed to the Town of Groton recorded with the Middlesex South District Registry of Deeds on July 24, 1996, in Book 26519 at Page 185;
10. To the Groton Conservation Trust, the parcel of land located off Lowell Road (Groton Assessor's Parcel 243-31.1) described in a deed to the Town of Groton recorded with the Middlesex South District Registry of Deeds on March 3, 2011, in Book 56554 at Page 226;
11. To the Groton Conservation Trust, the parcel of land located off Lowell Road (Groton Assessor's Parcel 233-98.2) described in a deed to the Town of Groton recorded with the Middlesex South District Registry of Deeds on November 30, 2009, in Book 53921 at Page 1;
12. To the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, the parcel of land located off Otter Lane (Groton Assessor's Parcel 234-3) described in a deed to the Town of Groton recorded with the Middlesex South District Registry of Deeds on December 18, 1987, in Book 18766 at Page 24;
13. To the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, the parcel of land located off Martins Pond Road (Groton Assessor's Parcel 224-15) described in a deed to the Town of Groton recorded with the Middlesex South District Registry of Deeds on February 13, 2020, in Book 74129 at Page 313;
14. To the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, the parcel of land located off Martins Pond Road (Groton Assessor's Parcel 224-18) described in a deed to the Town of Groton recorded with the Middlesex South District Registry of Deeds on March 14, 2019, in Book 72329 at Page 472;
15. To the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, the parcel of land located off West Main Street (Groton Assessor's Parcel 106-31) described in a deed to the Town of Groton recorded with the Middlesex South District Registry of Deeds on September 27, 2018, in Book 71675 at Page 143;
16. To the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, the parcel of land located off West Main Street (Groton Assessor's Parcel 106-32) described in a deed to the Town of Groton recorded with the Middlesex South District Registry of Deeds on September 27, 2018, in Book 71675 at Page 143;

And further, to authorize the Select Board to petition the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for special legislation to authorize any of said conservation restrictions in accordance with Article 97 of the Massachusetts Constitution, provided, however, that the General Court may make clerical or editorial changes of form only to the bill, unless the Select Board approves amendments thereto before enactment by the General Court, which amendments shall be within the public purposes of said petition; or to take any other action relative thereto.

Conservation Commission

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Summary: *This article will satisfy the requirement of the LAND Grant to have all properties purchased with CPA funds protected by a Conservation Restriction (CR). With this requirement met, the Town will be eligible for the 60% reimbursement the LAND grant will provide to the Town for the purchase of the Casella Property. In total, there are five properties that require a CR, which include parcels: 1.) Priest Family Conservation Area (Assessor's Parcels 224-15 & 18); 2.) Patricia Hallet*

Conservation Area (Assessor's Parcels 106-31 & 32); 3.) "Fuccillo Land" (Assessor's Parcels 233-98.1 & 98.2); 4.) "Baddacook Pond East Shore" (Assessor's Parcel 243-31.1); and 5.) "Unkety Well Site" (Groton Assessor's Parcel 231-85). The Groton Conservation Trust will hold the CR on the Priest & Hallet properties. The Division of Fisheries and Wildlife will hold the CR for the "Fuccillo Land," "Baddacook Pond East Shore," and "Unkety Well Site" properties. The Division of Fisheries of Wildlife aims to bundle several bordering properties owned by the Town under the care and custody of the Conservation Commission to broaden the reach of the protection of the CRs they will hold.

Article 24: Grant Conservation Restriction to Division of Fisheries and Wildlife

To see if the Town will vote to modify the vote taken under Article 19 at the 2011 Spring Town Meeting and authorize the Select Board and the Conservation Commission to grant a conservation restriction with respect to all or a portion of the real property located off of Lowell Road (Groton Assessor's Parcel 234-04) described in a deed to the Town of Groton recorded with the Middlesex South District Registry of Deeds on July 21, 1999, in Book 30446 at Page 61, to the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, upon such terms and conditions as the Select Board and the Conservation Commission deem to be in the best interest of the Town and in accordance with Chapter 184, Sections 31 through 33, of the Massachusetts General Laws; and further to authorize the Select Board to transfer the care, custody, and control of said parcel to the Conservation Commission after granting said conservation restriction to the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife; or to take any other action relative thereto.

Select Board
Conservation Commission

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: As part of the work to address the outstanding parcels needing conservation restrictions as required by the Community Preservation Act and LAND grant conditions, the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (DFW) has expressed an interest in protecting the "Brown Loaf" parcel (Groton Assessor's Parcel 234-04), which is a 103 +/- acre parcel, located south of Lowell Road behind the GELD substation. This property, purchased by the Town in 1999 at the Spring Town Meeting, was originally purchased by the Town for general municipal purposes. Options were explored for the best development potential but none panned out. This resulted in a 2011 Spring Town Meeting (Article 19) authorizing the Select Board to transfer the parcel to the Conservation Commission. This article would allow the Town to recoup most of the funds it spent to purchase the property while allowing the Conservation Commission and DFW the means to preserve a parcel with significant ecologic value.

Article 25: *Citizens' Petition – Rezone 797 Boston Road*

To see if the Town will vote to rezone the property situated at 797 Boston Road, which is shown on the Groton Assessor's Maps as Parcel 133-49 and described in a deed recorded with Middlesex County South District Registry of Deeds in Book 45322 at Page 597, as Neighborhood Business (NB), allowing for the construction of an indoor pickleball facility, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Citizens' Petition

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>
James McLean	4 Little Hollow Lane	Roberta Fusari	331 Riverbend Drive
Alfred Von Campe	29 Worthen Drive	Kristen Von Campe	29 Worthen Drive
Michael J. Hutton	33 Overlook Drive	Karen Hutton	33 Overlook Drive
Catherine Pauly	42 Forest Drive	Kathy Pietras	9 West Street
David Fusari	331 Riverbend Drive	Robert E. Anderson	270 Whiley Road

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Planning Board:

Summary: The following summary was prepared by the petitioners and represents their view on the Article: *The owner of this parcel wishes to change the zoning of the property from Residential–Agricultural (R-A) to Neighborhood Business (NB) to allow for the development of an indoor pickleball facility. The proposed facility would require the issuance of a Special Permit by the Zoning Board of Appeals, pursuant to the Zoning Bylaw.*

ARTICLES 26 THROUGH 34 WILL BE PART OF THE CONSENT AGENDA. PLEASE SEE EXPLANATION PROVIDED ON PAGE 2 OF THIS WARRANT.

Article 26: *Transfer within the Water Enterprise Fund*

To see if the Town will vote to transfer a sum or sums of money from the Water Enterprise Fund Surplus to the Fiscal Year 2023 Water Department Operating Budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Board of Water Commissioners

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Summary: *This article will request a transfer of funds from Water Surplus to help fund the Fiscal Year 2023 Water Department's Operational Expenses. As of the printing of the Warrant, it is anticipated that \$75,000 will be transferred for this purpose.*

Article 27: *Transfer Within the Center Sewer Enterprise Fund*

To see if the Town will vote to transfer a sum or sums of money from the Center Sewer Enterprise Fund Surplus to the Fiscal Year 2023 Center Sewer Enterprise Department Budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Board of Sewer Commissioners

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Summary: *This article allows the Sewer Department to transfer money from its surplus account to cover any deficit in the Fiscal Year 2023 Center Sewer Budget. As of the printing of the Warrant, it is anticipated that \$25,000 will be transferred for this purpose.*

Article 28: *Transfer Within the Four Corners Sewer Enterprise Fund*

To see if the Town will vote to transfer a sum or sums of money from the Four Corners Sewer Enterprise Fund Surplus to the Fiscal Year 2023 Four Corners Sewer Enterprise Department Budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Board of Sewer Commissioners

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Summary: *This article allows the Sewer Department to transfer money from its surplus account to cover any deficit in the Fiscal Year 2023 Four Corners Sewer Budget. As of the printing of the Warrant, it is anticipated that \$75,000 will be transferred for this purpose.*

Article 29: *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 2023 Cable Enterprise Department Budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Cable Advisory Committee

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Summary: *This article allows the Cable Advisory Committee to transfer money from its surplus account to cover any deficit in the Fiscal Year 2023 budget. As of the Printing of the Warrant, it is anticipated that \$____ will be transferred for this purpose.*

Article 30: *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:

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 31: *Current Year Line-Item Transfers*

To see if the Town will vote to transfer certain sums of money within the Fiscal Year 2023 budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Select Board

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Summary: *To transfer money within the Fiscal Year 2023 Budget should the need arise. A handout explaining any necessary transfers will be available at Town Meeting.*

Article 32: *Appropriate Money to Offset the 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 2023 Snow and Ice Budget, as approved under Article 5 of the 2022 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 FY 23.*

Article 33: *Debt Service for Middle School Track*

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 Chapter 44B, Section 5, of the Massachusetts General Laws, for debt service for Fiscal Year 2024 for the Middle School Track Project, as authorized under Article 7 of the May 1, 2021 Spring Town Meeting and Article 9 of the April 30, 2022 Spring Town Meeting, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Community Preservation Committee

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Community Preservation Committee:

Summary: *This article appropriates the debt payments for the Middle School Track Project. The anticipated debt service for Fiscal Year 2024 is \$_____. Funding for this article will come from the Unallocated Reserve of the Community Preservation Fund.*

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 2024 spending limits for the various revolving funds as follows:

Program or Purpose	FY 2024 Spending Limit
Stormwater Management	\$20,000
Conservation Commission	\$50,000
Building Rental Fund	\$50,000
Affordable Housing Marketing	\$20,000
Home Recycling Equipment	\$10,000
Access for Persons with Disabilities	\$10,000
Council on Aging Program Fund	\$50,000
Boat Excise Tax Fund	\$ 5,000
Transfer Station Glass	\$10,000
Senior Center Fitness Equipment	\$10,000

or take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Select Board:

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.*

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 10th Day of April in the year of our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Three.

John F. Reilly

John F. Reilly, Chair

Rebecca H. Pine

Rebecca H. Pine, Vice Chair

Matthew F. Pisani

Matthew F. Pisani, Clerk

Alison S. Manugian

Alison S. Manugian, Member

Peter S. Cunningham

Peter S. Cunningham, 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 2024**

Pursuant to Article 6 "Finance and Fiscal Procedure", Section 6.4 "The Budget", 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 2024 Operating Budget for the Town of Groton.

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 primary adjustments to the original budget submitted by the Town Manager were for collective bargaining. The following Chart shows the differences between the budget received by the Finance Committee from the Town Manager on December 31, 2022 and the budget that will be proposed to the 2023 Spring Town Meeting:

Respectfully submitted,

Mark W. Haddad

Groton Town Manager

Respectfully submitted,

Bud Robertson, Chair

Colby Doody, Vice Chair

Gary Green

David Manugian

Scott Whitefield

Michael Sulprizio

Mary Linskey

Town of Groton
Select Board
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