



## TOWN OF GROTON

173 Main Street  
Groton, Massachusetts 01450-1237  
Tel: (978) 448-1111  
Fax: (978) 448-1115

## Select Board

John F. Reilly, *Chair*  
Rebecca H. Pine, *Vice Chair*  
Matthew F. Pisani, *Clerk*  
Allison S. Manugian, *Member*  
Peter S. Cunningham, *Member*

**Town Manager**  
Mark W. Haddad

**To:** *Select Board*

**From:** *Mark W. Haddad – Town Manager*

**Subject:** *Weekly Agenda Update/Report*

**Date:** *March 27, 2023*

### TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Please note that Monday's meeting will commence at 6:00 p.m. In addition to the Town Manager's Report, Items for Select Board Consideration and Action and a review of the On-going Issues List, there are several items scheduled on Monday's Agenda. First, the Select Board and Finance Committee will be meeting in Joint Session to continue reviewing the Fiscal Year 2024 Proposed Operating Budget. Enclosed with this report is a memorandum from me summarizing the status of the Budget and recommended action. Second, the Community Preservation Committee will be in attendance to meet with both the Select Board and Finance Committee to review the various Proposed Projects that will be contained in the Warrant for 2023 Spring Town Meeting. Third, the Select Board will continue the Public Hearing from January 30, 2023 to consider Opting Out of the Vote by Mail for the May 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Town Election. Town Clerk Dawn Dunbar will be present for this item. Please note that Section 25B. (a)(1) of the General Laws reads in part that the *"select board may, after a public hearing and by recorded and public vote not less than 45 days prior to the date of the preliminary or election, opt out of the provisions of this subsection for any regular or special municipal preliminary or municipal election"*. Fourth, the Select Board will be conducting a Public Hearing to consider extending the Earth Removal Permit for Richard Blood, 94 West Main Street. Enclosed with this Report is a recommendation from the Earth Removal Stormwater Inspector on this proposed extension.

1. With the approval of the Select Board to move forward with the DPW Director-In-Training Program, we have completed our interviews of candidates for the position. An Interview Team made up of me, Select Board Member Alison Manugian, DPW Director Tom Delaney, Human Resources Director Melisa Doig and Executive Assistant Kara Cruikshank interviewed two current DPW Employees for the position. Based on the Interviews, I am pleased to inform the Select Board that I have appointed Brian Callahan to the position. Brian has been an exemplary employee of the DPW since 2015. I have attached a cop of his Resume to this Report for your review. I would respectfully request that the Board ratifies this appointment at Monday's meeting.

2. The Trails Committee has requested that I nominate for appointment Brittain McKinley to the Committee. I would respectfully request that the Board accept this nomination and appoint Mr. McKinley to the Trails Committee.
3. Enclosed with this Report is the latest Draft of the 2023 Spring Town Meeting Warrant. The Warrant has been updated to add the Article to amend the Dog Bylaw Hearing Process that the Board approved at your last meeting, as well as adding the positions taken by the Finance Committee on most of the Articles. In addition, I would ask the Board to consider the following action relative to the Warrant at Monday's meeting:
  - a. I would respectfully request that the Select Board open the Warrant and add an additional article. Specifically, the Community Preservation Committee would like to reduce the bonding authorization for the additional funding for the Middle School Track. For history and background, Article 7 of the 2021 Spring Town Meeting approved a bond of \$1.4 million to construct a new Middle School Track as part of the elementary school project. The Town has issued Bond Anticipation Notes on this approval and is paying interest. It is our intent to permanently borrow these funds within the next two years. Article 9 of the 2022 Spring Town Meeting approved an additional \$1 million for this project as the original \$1.4 million was insufficient to construct the Track. The Town has yet to borrow this additional \$1 million. It was our intent to issue a BAN for this \$1 million this June when we borrow additional funds for the FloRo construction project. That said, the Community Preservation Committee has decided that they have sufficient funding in their unallocated reserve to reduce the borrowing authorization of Article 9 by \$900,000 (from \$1 million to \$100,000). I would like to include an Article on the 2023 Spring Town Meeting Warrant that would change the funding breakdown of this account. The Article will read as follows:

*To see if the Town will appropriate a sum of money to pay additional costs of designing, constructing and equipping a new Middle School track, including the payment of all costs incidental and related thereto; to determine whether this amount shall be raised by borrowing, including a borrowing to be repaid with Community Preservation Act funds, or otherwise provided, or to take any other action relative thereto.*

Thank you for your consideration.

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**3. Continued:**

- b. Article 31 on the Warrant provides for Line-Item Transfers within the FY 2023 Budget. While we will also be requesting that the Select Board and Finance Committee approve Line-Item Transfers at the end of the Fiscal Year, there are some rather large requests that the Town Accountant and I would like to present to the 2023 Spring Town Meeting. Please consider the following:

		<b>FUNDING NEEDED</b> (Line Items in Deficit (or not expected to be in Deficit))			
Line Item	Ledger		Original Amount	Adj. & New	Final Amount
Number	Number	Account	Presented 3/27/23	Requests April 2023	to Transfer
1242	5400	241 Building Inspection Gen Expenses	\$ 20,000.00		\$ 20,000.00
1215	5620	510 Board of Health Consulting	\$ 5,355.00		\$ 5,355.00
1701	5120	640 Country Club Wages	\$ 44,000.00		\$ 44,000.00
1702	5400	640 Country Club General Expenses	\$ 11,000.00		\$ 11,000.00
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 80,355.00</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 80,355.00</b>
		<b>FUNDING FROM</b> (Line Items with Surplus)			
3010	5400	914 Health Insurance			80,355.00
		<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$ 80,355.00</b>
		<b>Net Transfer</b>			<b>\$ -</b>

- c. I would respectfully request that the Board take positions on the various Articles at Monday's meeting.

4. With regard to this week's update on the development of the FY 2024 Budget, enclosed with this report is a memorandum updating the Select Board and Finance Committee. This will be reviewed under Agenda Item #II. In addition, I am seeking a \$5,200 annual stipend for the Council on Aging Director for the additional duties she has taken on managing the Center in West Groton. For history and perspective, please consider the following history. The Center in West Groton was constructed in 2019 primarily and ostensibly to house the Council on Aging Operation. During the design phase of the building, members of the Council on Aging's Strategic Planning Committee and members of the Center's Building Committee conducted charettes and fundraising meetings describing the new building as a Community Center for use by all members of the Community. They even changed the name of the "Senior Center" to the "Center". This has created incredible interest and use of the Building.

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4. **Continued:**

The Council on Aging Director's primary function is to manage the Department and create programming for our Seniors. She often works evenings and weekends overseeing those programs. We flex her time to address these additional hours. What we haven't accounted for is all the other requests for use of the Center. From the Garden Club to the Women's Club to the Nashoba Valley Artists to requests for birthday parties and other special events, the Council on Aging Director's schedule is constantly changing and requiring her to work more evenings and weekends serving as a Building Manager, not just the Council on Aging Director. This additional duty (including scheduling and setting up the various rooms for the requested events) is not contemplated in her job description and I believe we need to compensate the Director for taking on the added responsibility. You should also be aware that we are working on a new building use policy due to the demand at the Center, including charging a rental fee. We will be coming to the Fall Town Meeting asking the Town to create an additional revolving fund so that these rental funds can be used to hire a "Building Monitor" to assist the Director in managing and covering the Center for all of this activity. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

5. Please see the update to the meeting schedule that will take the Board through the 2023 Spring Town Meeting:

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. The Groton Garden Club is celebrating their 100 Year Anniversary this year. They are requesting that the Select Board adopt a proclamation to make April 2, 2023 "Groton Garden Club Day". Enclosed with this report is the proposed Proclamation. I would respectfully request that the Board adopt this proclamation at Monday's meeting.

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2. I would respectfully request that the Board consider approving a One Day Wine and Malt Beverage License for the Friends of Prescott for an Open Mic Night at the Prescott School on Friday, April 14, 2023 from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.
3. I would respectfully request that the Board consider approving a One Day Wine and Malt Beverage License for the Groton Neighbors for an Event at First Parish Church on Friday, May 5, 2023 from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

MWH/rjb  
enclosures



## TOWN OF GROTON

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Groton, Massachusetts 01450-1237  
Tel: (978) 448-1111  
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## Select Board

John F. Reilly, *Chair*  
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Peter S. Cunningham, *Member*

**Town Manager**  
Mark W. Haddad

**To:** *Select Board*  
*Finance Committee*

**From:** *Mark W. Haddad – Town Manager*

**Subject:** *Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Update – GDRSD Committee Approved Budget*

**Date:** *March 23, 2022*

Please be advised that on March 22, 2023, the Groton Dunstable Regional School Committee held a public meeting to discuss revisions to their Fiscal Year 2024 Budget and Operating Assessment for the Town of Groton. At this meeting, the School Committee voted to amend the Budget and issued the following Assessment to the Town of Groton for Fiscal Year 2024:

Operating Assessment	\$26,177,213
Debt Assessment – Excluded	\$ 406,982
Debt Assessment – Non-Excluded	\$ 58,814
Capital Assessment	<u>\$ 542,257</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$27,185,266</b>

As you are aware, after various reductions to the Municipal Budget and increases in revenue (see attached spreadsheet), the proposed Town Manager's Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2024 had set aside \$25,937,716 for the GDRSD Assessment. This means that the proposed budget is now out of balance by \$239,497. Please be advised that the Town of Groton has no choice but to present the proposed Assessment to Town Meeting. As you know, we cannot present a budget to Town Meeting that is out of balance. It is also important to note that we have maxed out all potential new revenues. There are no additional revenues that I can recommend to eliminate this deficit. The Finance Committee and Select Board have various decisions to make in order to balance the Budget. Please consider the following:

**Option #1 - Reduce the Municipal Budget by an additional \$239,497.** At this point, the Finance Team and I have developed additional cuts that can be considered. You are already aware of some of them (current vacant positions, etc.). As I am sure you can imagine, I am not in favor of any further cuts to the municipal budget. That said, if the Finance Committee and Select Board want to see additional cuts, I will provide a proposed list of reductions to the Finance Committee at their meeting of March 29, 2023 (I have posted a Select Board Meeting for that night as well).

**Option #2 – Amend GDRSD Assessment at Town Meeting.** As stated previously in this memorandum, the Finance Committee’s Main Budget Motion to Town Meeting must contain the Proposed Operating Assessment (\$26,177,213) from the Groton Dunstable Regional School District, as well as the Debt and Capital Assessments. That said, the Main Motion can be immediately amended on the Floor of Town Meeting to reduce said number to the amount (\$25,937,716) that provides for a balanced budget. While this is an option, it should be a last resort because there is a chance the amendment would fail and we would then be in a position to either reduce the Municipal Budget before Town Meeting dissolves, or the Select Board will immediately have to call for an override of Proposition 2½.

**Option #3 – Select Board Places a Question on the May 23, 2023 Annual Town Election Ballot for a General Override of Proposition 2½.** This Option would have to be supported by both the Select Board and the Finance Committee. Since the Finance Committee is responsible for the Budget Motion that is presented to Town Meeting, they would have to support increased spending. Since the Select Board is the only entity that can call for an Override of Proposition 2½, they would also have to approve increased spending. Should both Boards agree to support an Override, I would respectfully request that any override consider restoring some Municipal funding as well. As stated above, the Budget is currently out of balance by \$239,497. Should the Town seek an override, I would request that the following items be considered for funding in the Municipal Budget:

Vacant Dispatcher Position	\$ 52,000
Additional Firefighter/EMT	\$ 30,000
Sunday Hours at the Library	\$ 29,050
Health Insurance	\$ 40,000
Snow and Ice Deficit	<u>\$100,000</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$251,050</b>

The total Override request would be **\$490,547**. An override of this amount would add \$0.19 to the anticipated FY 2024 Tax Rate and cost the average tax payer (a home valued at \$633,985) an additional \$121 annually.

The process at Town Meeting would be to pass a budget that is balanced (School Assessment at \$25,937,716 and the Municipal Budget at \$16,806,679). There would then be a contingent appropriation of \$490,547 that would only go into effect if the Override Question were to pass. That way, if the Override fails, we would still have a budget without having to return to Town Meeting. Should the Override fail, the Town would not move forward with the additional services and the School Committee would have to consider reducing their budget to meet the balanced budget appropriation. Should the School Committee refuse to reduce their budget, the Town of Groton would have to call for a Special Town Meeting prior to June 30<sup>th</sup> to request the additional funding by either reducing the Municipal Budget or seeking additional funding and requesting another Override of Proposition 2½. This would have to happen almost immediately after May 23 as it will take a minimum of 35 days to schedule the Town Meeting and potential Special Election (Town Clerk needs to be notified 35 days prior to the date of the Election). We would need to this prior to June 30<sup>th</sup>.

I look forward to discussing this with you in more detail at your joint meeting on Monday, March 27<sup>th</sup>. In the meantime, please feel free to reach out to me with any additional questions or concerns.

MWH/rjb

cc: Patricia DuFresne – Town Accountant  
Hannah Moller – Treasurer/Collector  
Megan Foster – Principal Assessor  
Dawn Dunbar – Town Clerk  
Melisa Doig – Human Resources Director  
Kara Cruikshank – Executive Assistant  
Dr. Laura Chesson – Superintendent – Groton Dunstable Regional School District  
Sherry Kersey – Director of Business – Groton Dunstable Regional School District

enclosure



<u>Line Item</u>	<u>Amount Reduced</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
Nashoba Tech Assessment	\$ 47,381	The anticipated assessment from Nashoba Tech has come in \$47,381 less than carried in the original budget
Police Expenses	\$ 5,000	Reduce Minor Capital
Fire Department Wages	\$ 30,000	The proposed new position would be eliminated. While the total savings is \$61,800, the overtime and call salaries budget would need to be increased, thereby reducing the savings by \$31,800.
Fire Department Expenses	\$ 6,800	Since the new Firefighter Position is being eliminated, the clothing allowance would not be funded. There is also a \$5,000 reduction in Training.
Communication Wages	\$ 52,000	One of the two vacancies would not be filled.
Library Wages	\$ 29,050	Eliminate Sunday Hours and Summer Reading
Highway Department Expenses	\$ 5,000	Reduce Minor Capital
Building Commissioner Expenses	\$ 2,000	Eliminate Travel and Conferences
Municipal Building Expenses	\$ 10,000	Eliminate Minor Capital
Council on Aging Wages	\$ 19,000	The part-time Administrative Assistant Position would be funded from the COA Gift Account, as well as the Formula Grant. This would result in less funding for programs, but the Administrative Support is essential to the Operation of the COA.
Snow and Ice Deficit	\$ 100,000	Make-Up any deficit in FY 2023
Health Insurance	\$ 25,000	Based on the above reductions, the Town would realize a savings of \$25,000 in this budget.
<b>Total Reductions</b>	<b>\$ 331,231</b>	
<b>New Revenues</b>		
Groton School PILOT	\$ 34,000	
Lawrence Academy PILOT	\$ 7,500	
GELD PILOT	\$ 5,000	
Increase in State Aid	\$ 22,269	
<b>Total Available For GDRSD</b>	<b>\$ 400,000</b>	

## 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

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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."<sup>1</sup> "Every action taken at the meeting must be pursuant to some article in the warrant and must be within the scope of such article."<sup>2</sup>

## 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.

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

<sup>2</sup> *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.

# Electronic Voting at Town Meeting



Voting at Town Meeting will be conducted using an electronic voting system purchased by the Town of Groton as authorized by Town Meeting in October, 2022. Instead of using placards to be raised and counted, voters will use wireless handsets to cast their vote quickly, accurately and privately.

## Voter Check-In

At check-in, voters will be given a handset. No record is made of which voter receives which handset. All handsets will be tested prior to the meeting. Voters physically unable to use a handset, will be seated in a manual-count section and their votes will be counted by tellers. For those with visual impairments, large handsets with braille are available.

## Test Vote

At the beginning of the meeting, the Moderator will conduct a test vote to get everyone comfortable with the voting procedures.

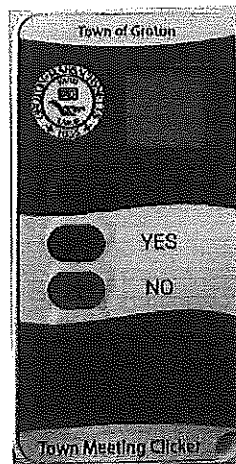
## Proxy Voting Prohibited

The handset given to a voter at check-in is for the exclusive use of that voter. Voting with a handset that has been issued to another individual is strictly forbidden.

## Voting

When the Moderator announces it is time to vote:

- Press 1A (green button) for YES →
- Press 2B (red button) for No →
- If you wish to not vote, press no buttons



## Handset Display

The display on the handset:

- OK means the system receiver has received your vote
- A "1" for Yes or "2" for No shows the vote the system received.
- The small "R" at the top of the screen indicates the handset is communicating with the receiver
- The icons in the top left indicate the WiFi signal strength.

## Help Desk

A Help Desk will be able to assist voters who have trouble with using the handset. If a handset malfunctions, a voter will receive a new handset.

## Handset Return

If you leave the meeting temporarily, please keep the handset with you. If the meeting ends or your leave, return the handset to the check-in table.



## **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 163 West Main Street	Precincts 2 & 3 Middle School North Gymnasium 346 Main Street
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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:** *No Position*

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

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**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:** *Recommended Unanimously*

**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.*

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**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:** *Recommended Unanimously*

**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.*

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**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: *Recommended Unanimously***

**Summary:** *The purpose of this article is to fund the Town's OPEB Liability. The Select Board and Finance Committee have adopted a funding policy for this purpose. One of the funding goals is to commit to an annual appropriation to the Trust that would keep the Net Present Value Liability from growing until such time as the Town can begin to pay down the liability. In Fiscal Year 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.*

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**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 31<sup>st</sup>; 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.

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**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:

<b>Item #1 – Ambulance 1 Replacement</b>	<b>\$442,900</b>	<b>Fire and EMS</b>
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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: Recommended Unanimously**

<b>Item #2 – Command Vehicle</b>	<b>\$70,000</b>	<b>Fire and EMS</b>
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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: Recommended Unanimously**

**Item #3 – 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:** *Recommended Unanimously*

**Item #4 – 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:** *Recommended Unanimously*

**Item #5 – 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:** *Recommended Unanimously*

**Item #6 – 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:** *Recommended Unanimously*

**Item #7 – 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: *Recommended Unanimously*****Item #8 – 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: *Recommended Unanimously*****Item #9 – 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: *Recommended Unanimously*****Item #10 – 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: *Recommended Unanimously***

**Item #11 – 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:** *Recommended Unanimously*

**Item #12 – 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:** *Recommended Unanimously*

***Town Manager***

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**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:** *Recommended Unanimously*

**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.*

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**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: *Recommendation Deferred Until Town Meeting***

**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.*

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**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: *Recommended (4 In Favor, 2 Against – Manugian and Green)***

**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.*

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**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: *No Position***

**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.*

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**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: *Recommended Unanimously***

**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 by 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.*

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**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: Recommended Unanimously**

**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 \$10 million. The Town is seeking all available Federal and State Grants to offset the cost of this water main extension.*

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### **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:	\$ 20,000
Open Space Reserve:	\$106,991
Historic Resource Reserve:	\$106,991
Community Housing Reserve:	\$106,991
Unallocated Reserve:	\$728,937

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.*

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**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**

**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 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**

**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**

**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:

Housing Coordinator – FY 2024

\$55,857

**Summary:** *This application is requesting \$55,857 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 G:

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**

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**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: *No Position***

**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 into two (2) Representative Districts, the First Middlesex District and 37<sup>th</sup> Middlesex District. There are currently 236 Residents residing within 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 reduce voter confusion and yield a cost savings to the Town as it would require less support during elections.*

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**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: *No Position***

**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.*

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**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 select board 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: *No Position***

**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.*

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**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: *No Position***



**Summary:** *Town Counsel has advised that our current internal appeal process deviates from state law and gives appellants technical arguments that may jeopardize the Town's decisions on appeal. This article seeks to eliminate the discrepancy between our appeal process and State law. 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 matters without the need for a full trial.*

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**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: *No Position***

**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.*

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**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: *No Position***

**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.*

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**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: *No Position***

**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.*

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**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:** *Recommended Unanimously*

**Summary:** *The Conservation Commission has reached an agreement with the Casella Realty Trust to purchase a parcel of land, of approximately 119 acres, using Conservation Commission Funds. The Conservation Commission has applied for, and been awarded a LAND (Land Acquisition for Natural Diversity) Grant from the Commonwealth of MA to defray the cost of the purchase. While the Conservation Commission is able to spend monies from the Conservation Fund without a Town Meeting vote, the Commission needs Town Meeting approval to receive reimbursement from the LAND 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. This article asks the Town Meeting to endorse this purchase.*

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#### **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 Massachusetts Department of Fish & Game, the parcel of land located off Chicopee Row (Groton Assessor's Parcel 231-85.1), referred to as the "Unkety Well Site", 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 Massachusetts Department of Fish & Game, the parcel of land located off Chicopee Row (Groton Assessor's Parcel 231-94), referred to as the "Torrey Woods Conservation Area", 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 Massachusetts Department of Fish & Game, the parcel of land located off Hawtree Way (Groton Assessor's Parcel 231-63), referred to as the "Hawtree Conservation Area", 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 Massachusetts Department of Fish & Game, the parcel of land located off Chicopee Row (Groton Assessor's Parcel 231-95), referred to as the "Floyd Conservation Area", 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 Massachusetts Department of Fish & Game, the parcel of land located off Martins Pond Road (Groton Assessor's Parcel 243-17), referred to as the "Harrison Ripley Forest", 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 Massachusetts Department of Fish & Game, the parcel of land located off Martins Pond Road (Groton Assessor's Parcel 244-26), referred to as the "Harrison Ripley Forest", 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 Massachusetts Department of Fish & Game, the parcel of land located off Sawtell Drive, Groton, Middlesex County, Massachusetts (Groton Assessor's Parcel 232-9), referred to as the "Sawtell Conservation Area", 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 Massachusetts Department of Fish & Game, the parcel of land located off Sawtell Drive (Groton Assessor's Parcel 232-14), referred to as the "Sawtell Conservation Area", 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 Massachusetts Department of Fish & Game, the parcel of land located off Kailey's Way (Groton Assessor's Parcel 232-38), referred to as the "Groton Hills Conservation Area", 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 Massachusetts Department of Fish & Game, the parcel of land located off Lowell Road (Groton Assessor's Parcel 243-31.1), referred to as the "Baddacock Pond East Shore", 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 Massachusetts Department of Fish & Game, the parcel of land located off Lowell Road (Groton Assessor's Parcel 233-98.2), referred to as the "Fuccillo Land", 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 Massachusetts Department of Fish & Game, the parcel of land located off Lowell Road (Groton Assessor's Parcel 233-98.1), referred to as the "Fuccillo Land", 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;

13. To the Massachusetts Department of Fish & Game, the parcel of land located off Otter Lane (Groton Assessor's Parcel 234-3), referred to as the "Heron Ridge Conservation Area", 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;
14. To the Groton Conservation Trust, the parcel of land located off Martins Pond Road (Groton Assessor's Parcel 224-15.1), referred to as the "Priest Family Conservation Area", 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;
15. To the Groton Conservation Trust, parcel of land located off Martins Pond Road (Groton Assessor's Parcel 224-18), referred to as the "Martins Pond Conservation Area", 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;
16. To the Groton Conservation Trust, parcel of land located off West Main Street (Groton Assessor's Parcel 106-31), referred to as the "Patricia Hallet Conservation Area", 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;
17. To the Groton Conservation Trust, parcel of land located off West Main Street (Groton Assessor's Parcel 106-32), referred to as the "Patricia Hallet Conservation Area", 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: *No Position***

**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. A Conservation Restriction, held by a different entity than the owner of the land, provides an additional level of protection for land set aside for conservation. Please see the Explanation narrative with its accompanying maps in your meeting packet for further information on the specifics of this warrant article.*

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**Article 24:     *Grant Conservation Restriction to Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game***

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 Massachusetts Department of Fish & Game, 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: *No Position***

**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), by purchasing a Conservation Restriction on it. The Brown Loaf parcel is a 103 +/- acre parcel, located south of Lowell Road behind the GELD substation. This property was originally purchased by the Town, at the Spring Town Meeting in 1999, for general municipal purposes. Options were explored for the best development potential but none worked 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 negotiate the terms and award a CR to DFW, thereby recouping most of the funds it spent to purchase the property. Once the CR is completed, the Select Board will finalize the transfer of ownership of the parcel to the Conservation Commission.*

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**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:** *No Position*

**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.*

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**ARTICLES 26 THROUGH 35 WILL BE PART OF THE CONSENT AGENDA. PLEASE SEE EXPLANATION PROVIDED ON PAGE 2 OF THIS WARRANT.**

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**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: *Recommended Unanimously***

**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.*

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**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: *Recommended Unanimously***

**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.*

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**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:** *Recommended Unanimously*

**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.*

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**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:** *Recommended Unanimously*

**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.*

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**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:** *Recommendation Deferred Until Town Meeting*

**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.*

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**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:** *Recommendation Deferred Until Town Meeting*

**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.*

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**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:** *Recommendation Deferred Until Town Meeting*

**Summary:** *This article will allow the Town to fund any deficit in the Snow and Ice Account in FY 23.*

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**Article 33:     *Amend Funding Distribution for Middle School Track***

To see if the Town will appropriate a sum of money to pay additional costs of designing, constructing and equipping a new Middle School track, including the payment of all costs incidental and related thereto; to determine whether this amount shall be raised by borrowing, including a borrowing to be repaid with Community Preservation Act funds, or otherwise provided, or to take any other action relative thereto.

***Community Preservation Committee***

**Select Board:**

**Finance Committee:**

**Summary:**     Article 7 of the 2021 Spring Town Meeting approved a bond of \$1.4 million to construct a new Middle School Track as part of the elementary school project. The Town has issued Bond Anticipation Notes on this approval and is paying interest. It is the Town's intent to permanently borrow these funds within the next two years. Article 9 of the 2022 Spring Town Meeting approved an additional \$1 million for this project as the original \$1.4 million was insufficient to construct the Track. The Town has yet to borrow this additional \$1 million. It was the Town's intent to issue a BAN for this \$1 million this June. That said, the Community Preservation Committee has decided that they have sufficient funding in their unallocated reserve to reduce the borrowing authorization of Article 9 by \$900,000 so only \$100,000 will need to be borrowed (instead of the \$1 million authorized).

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**Article 34:     *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: *Recommended Unanimously***

**Summary:**     This article appropriates the debt payments for the Middle School Track Project. The anticipated debt service for Fiscal Year 2024 is \$55,000. Funding for this article will come from the Unallocated Reserve of the Community Preservation Fund.

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**Article 35:     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:

<b>Program or Purpose</b>	<b>FY 2024 Spending Limit</b>
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: *Recommended Unanimously***

**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.*

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**SELECT BOARD/FINCOM MEETING MINUTES  
MONDAY, MARCH 27, 2023  
TOWN HALL SECOND FLOOR MEETING ROOM**

Approved 4/29/23

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

**SB Absent:** none

**FinCom Members Present:** Bud Robertson, Chair; Colby Doody, Vice Chair; Gary Green; Mary Linskey; Michael Sulprizio; Scott Whitefield

**FinCom Absent:** Dave Manugian

**Also Present:** Mark Haddad, Town Manager; Kara Cruikshank, Executive Assistant; Dr. Laura Chesson, GDRSD Superintendent; Sherry Kersey, Business Manager; Bruce Easom, CPC Chair; Fay Raynor, Groton-Dunstable Regional School Committee; Brian Callahan, DPW Director in Training

**Finance Team:** Megan Foster, Principal Assessor; Hannah Moller, Treasurer/Collector; Dawn Dunbar, Town Clerk; Patricia Dufresne, Town Accountant; Melisa Doig, Human Resource Director

Mr. Reilly called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and reviewed the agenda.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mr. Robertson called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Mr. Pisani announced on Sunday, April 2nd from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm, the Groton Firefighter Association will be hosting a breakfast with the Easter Bunny. Tickets are still available.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Prest said three children and three adults were killed today in Nashville, Tennessee. Respectfully, Mr. Prest asked for a moment of silence for the children and adults.

Ms. Dunbar reminded everyone that nomination papers are still available in the Town Clerk's office for the May 23, 2023 Election. Papers must be pulled by 5:00 pm on March 31, 2023, and must be returned by Tuesday, April 4<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 pm. Nomination Papers must have at least 50 registered voters' signatures to be certified. There are still several elected boards with potential vacancies. The committees with vacancies are as follows: Park Commission, (1) three-year term; Board of Health, (1) three-year term; Planning Board (1) three-year term; Sewer Commission, (1) three-year term; Groton Dunstable School Committee, (1) three-year term; and the Groton Housing Authority, (1) five-year term. If anyone's interested, please contact the Clerk's office for further details. The last day to register to vote and to participate in the 2023 Spring Town Meeting and the 2023 Town Election is Wednesday, April 19<sup>th</sup> by 5:00 pm. The Town Hall will be open until 5:00 pm on Friday, March 31, 2023.

**In Joint Session with the Finance Committee**

Mr. Haddad started by saying he believes the best way to continue the review of the FY 2024 Budget is to walk everyone through his memo that was provided in the packet, a memo dated March 23, 2023. Then he will walk everyone through the memo that was provided on March 25, 2023, which explains the various options in more detail. Mr. Haddad said on March 22, 2023, the Groton Dunstable Regional School Committee held a public meeting to discuss revisions to their FY24 Budget and Operating Assessments for the Town of Groton. At that meeting, they voted for an Operating Assessment of \$26,177,213, which puts

