

**SELECT BOARD / FINCOM MEETING MINUTES  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2024  
S.B. APPROVED / FINCOM APPROVED**

**SB Members Present:** Peter Cunningham, Chair; Alison Manugian, Clerk; Matt Pisani; Becky Pine

**SB Members Absent:** John Reilly, Vice Chair

**Also Present:** Mark Haddad, Town Manager; Kara Cruikshank, Executive Assistant to the Town Manager; Senator John Cronin; Senator Edward Kennedy, Representative Margaret Scarsdale; Representative Danillo Sena; Laura Chesson, Groton Dunstable Regional School District Superintendent; Sherry Kersey, GDRSD Director of Business and Finance; Jason Silva, Dunstable Town Administrator; Hannah Moller, Treasurer/Tax Collector; Patricia DuFresne, Assistant Director of Finance/Town Accountant; Megan Foster, Principal Assessor; Dawn Dunbar, Town Clerk; Melisa Doig, Human Resources Director

**Finance Committee Members:** Bud Robertson; Mary Linskey; Michael Sulprizio; Gary Green

**GDRSD School Committee Members:** Fay Raynor; Brian LeBlanc; Catherine Awa; Rafael Glod

**Dunstable Selectmen Members:** Leah Basbanes, Kieran Meehan

**Dunstable Advisory Board:** Jake Lewon, Matthew Naughton

Mr. Cunningham called the Groton Select Board meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Mr. Kieran Meehan called the Dunstable Board of Selectmen meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

NONE

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

NONE

**TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

**1. Approve and Sign Bonds for Water Debt and BAN for Various Projects.**

Ms. Hannah Moller, Treasurer/Tax Collector, was in attendance for the discussion.

Mr. Haddad explained that the Town went to the Bond Market the previous week for funds for the Whitney Pond Well #3, the Manganese Water Treatment Facility, and the new Fire Truck (scheduled to arrive in April/May). The original bid total was \$11,730,000, and the town received 11 bids, which, according to Ms. Moller, was the largest number of bidders in any borrowing. The lowest true interest cost (TIC) came in at 3.57%, with a premium of \$722,091.25. He said this premium would reduce the borrowing to \$11,135,000 after the underwriter's fees and issuance costs. Raymond James and Associates was the low bidder. Mr. Haddad said it was great news for the town's Water Rate Payers and Taxpayers and a testament to the strength of its AAA Bond Rating. The Town also received bids for Bond Anticipation Notes (BAN) in the amount of \$1,575,584 as follows: \$1,405,374 for the Middle School Track, \$83,416 for Police Radios, and \$86,794 for Whitney Well Improvements. Mr. Haddad said this BAN was awarded to Fidelity Capital Markets for their bid of 3.4368% net interest cost (NIC), with a premium of \$12,746.48, which would cover the underwriter's fees and issuance costs.

Ms. Pine explained that the term "premium" means the lender is paying the town for the privilege of lending it money. Ms. Moller said that, in this instance, they are reducing the amount of funds they are borrowing. Ms. Pine said it was good news for the Taxpayers.

*Ms. Manugian made a motion to approve and sign the Bonds for the Water Debt and BAN for various projects, as stated in the packet. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

**2. Consider Ratifying the Town Manager's Appointment of Erin Trainor as Council on Aging Departmental Assistant.**

*Ms. Pine made a motion to ratify the Town Manager's appointment of Erin Trainor as Council on Aging Departmental Assistant effective immediately. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

**3. Review First Draft of the 2024 Spring Town Meeting Warrant**

This item will be discussed/reviewed after the Legislative Workshop.

**4. FY 2025 Budget Update**

This item will be discussed after the Legislative Workshop.

**5. Update on Select Board Meeting Schedule Through the End of the Year**

Monday, February 19, 2024	No Meeting- Presidents Day
Monday, February 26, 2024	Public Hearing on the Warrant- to be Held at Groton Center
Tuesday, February 27, 2024	Special Budget Forum- Swallow Union Elementary School
Monday, March 4, 2024	Issue Warrant for Town Meeting- REMOTE MEETING
Wednesday, March 6, 2024	Special Budget Forum- Groton (Senior) Center
Monday, March 11, 2024	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, March 18, 2024	No Meeting
Monday, March 25, 2024	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Tuesday, March 26, 2024	2024 Spring Town Meeting
Monday, April 1, 2024	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Tuesday, April 2, 2024	Special Election to Consider an Override of Proposition 2 1//2
Monday, April 8, 2024	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, April 15, 2024	No Meeting- Patriots Day
Monday, April 22, 2024	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Tuesday, April 23, 2024	2024 Annual Town Election

**ITEMS FOR SELECT BOARD CONSIDERATION AND ACTION**

**1. Consider Amending Committee Vacancy Policy to Limit the Time a Committee Interest Form will be kept on file for Consideration to Six (6) Months.**

Mr. Haddad said during the last Select Board meeting that he proposed amending the Committee Vacancy Appointment Policy. The proposed amendment suggested that the town only keep Committee Interest Forms for up to six months. Mr. Haddad requested the Board consider approving the revised Policy.

*Ms. Pine made a motion to approve the Policy as printed in the packet. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **Pursuant to the Charter, Authorize the Town Manager and One Member of the Select Board to Sign Warrants for the Next 30 Days.**

Ms. Manugian made a motion to authorize the Town Manager and the Select Board Chair to sign Warrants for the next 30 days. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **ON-GOING ISSUES**

- C. **Florence Roche Elementary School-** Mr. Haddad said the Department Heads and Select Board members had a great tour of the new Florence Roche Elementary School building on February 6th. He praised the outstanding progress of the project, which is on schedule and under budget. This is a testament to the hard work of the Owner's Project Manager (OPM) from Left Field, the architects from Studio G, and the Gilbane Building Company. Ms. Pine wanted to add that the school is gorgeous and well-planned.

*Mr. Robertson called the Finance Committee to order at 6:10 PM.*

#### **Finance Committee: Vote on FY25 Regional School District Assessments**

Mr. Mike Sulprizio, Ms. Mary Linskey, Mr. Gary Green, and Mr. Bud Robertson from the Finance Committee were present.

Mr. Haddad said the Groton Dunstable Regional School Committee voted on their Assessment at their last meeting.

Mr. Robertson entertained a motion to approve the Groton Dunstable Regional School District assessment, in the amount of \$29,482,865, and the Nashoba Valley Technical Regional High School's assessment, in the amount of \$966,719. The total assessment amounts to \$30,449,584.

*Mr. Green made a motion to approve the assessment for the Groton Dunstable Regional School District (GDRSD), in the amount of \$29,482,865, and the Nashoba Valley Technical Regional High School's assessment, in the amount of \$966,719. The total assessment amounts to \$30,449,584. Ms. Linskey seconded the motion.*

Discussion:

*Mr. Haddad clarified that the GDRSD has come in with a lower Capital Assessment of \$275,000. As a result, less money will be taken out of the Capital Stabilization Fund at the Town Meeting. The Operational and Debt Assessments will remain the same as previously planned. Mr. Robertson confirmed that the Finance Committee had already approved the Municipal Assessment. He also mentioned that the total Town budget, including the Assessments is \$52,772,412.*

*The motion carried unanimously.*

**6:15 P.M. In Joint Session with the Finance Committee, Groton Dunstable Regional School District Committee, Dunstable Board of Selectmen, and Advisory Board- Legislative Update with Senator John Cronin, Senator Edward Kennedy, Representative Margaret Scarsdale, and Representative Sena.**

The Groton Select Board requested a Legislative Workshop with the Dunstable Board of Selectmen and the Groton Select Board. Mr. Haddad also invited the Groton Dunstable Regional School District Committee, the Groton Finance Committee, the Dunstable Advisory Board, Superintendent Chesson, and Dunstable Town Administrator Silva. Senators Cronin and Kennedy, along with Representatives Scarsdale and Sena, were in attendance for the Workshop. The Workshop aimed to discuss the difficult year the Towns of Groton and Dunstable and the Groton Dunstable Regional School District are facing in Fiscal year 2025.

Mr. Haddad thanked the state delegates for attending the meeting that evening. He mentioned that he had provided them with topics they wanted to discuss to make the meeting more efficient. Mr. Cunningham mentioned they were seeking to gain perspective on the budget process and what that looks like. Senator Cronin started by expressing his appreciation for the forum and stated that Groton has an exceptional Town Manager, Mr. Haddad.

Senator Cronin has said that the budget environment was exceptionally challenging, and to explain the budget process, the Governor will submit her budget in January, followed by the House budget in April. The Senate will then create its budget in mid to late May, after which the House and Senate conferees will reconcile their versions of the budget by sometime in June.

Senator Cronin said that for Fiscal Year 24, they projected a 1.6 percent fiscal growth; they are experiencing a 1.2 percent fiscal growth. He said the budget is a billion dollars under benchmark in terms of total tax collections. He said they are in a fluid process, but the consensus revenue number for FY25's budget will depend on the economy over the next few months. However, he believes there are reasons to be optimistic. In hindsight, he mentioned that the Commonwealth received approximately \$115 billion in federal relief through the Cares Act and ARPA, etc. Those funds have stopped, and the State aims to return to sustainable growth measures. Senator Cronin emphasized that Groton is not alone in facing these challenges and that surrounding towns are dealing with similar issues.

Representative Scarsdale said she wants to think of these conversations as being in this together, and the delegation is there to listen, hear issues, and be a strong partner. She thanked everyone for including them. Representative Sena mirrored Representative Scarsdale by saying thank you, and they are there to support and work with the towns during these times, and it is the time to discuss these critical matters.

Mr. Haddad said the Towns and the School District appreciate earmarks, grants, and other funds the Legislative Delegation has secured for various projects. He hoped the delegation could help move along the conversation with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) regarding funding for the PFAS-related issue. Senator Cronin informed that he had a positive discussion with DEP's Regional Administrator, Mary Jude Pigsley, who expects to provide some news on the matter within 30 days. Mr. Haddad stated that any funding for the PFAS project would be greatly appreciated. Dunstable Town Administrator Jason Silva said Mary Jude Pigsley has been a huge asset and resource to both Dunstable and Groton.

Mr. Haddad wanted to raise the topic of Chapter 90 funds, as there has been an uptick in funds from the Millionaire's tax collection. Mr. Haddad mentioned they had spoken to their representatives at MassDOT, but there was no guarantee that these funds would continue. He asked if there was any update on the matter. Groton has received an additional \$300,000 to address roads and paving. Senator Cronin stated that there is currently no reliable data available regarding the Millionaire's tax collection or fair share money for the upcoming years. He said it is a priority to ensure that the transportation share of those funds is delivered back to municipalities. Mr. Silva stated that Dunstable received \$115,000 in funds from the Millionaire's tax collection.

A quorum of the School Committee was present, and Ms. Raynor called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Ms. Manugian wanted to discuss climate change-driven needs with the delegation. Mr. Haddad said Groton had received a regional grant working with the cities of Fitchburg and Leominster and the towns of Ashburnham and Pepperell. He said they were in the process of planning and implementing the program. Mr. Haddad asked if the MVP program is going to be fully funded. Senator Cronin expects that to be a continued priority as it is a popular program in cities and towns. Ms. Pine said she heard that due to the money infrastructure, funds would be allocated to address climate change-related problems. She specifically mentioned the flooding on Broadmeadow Road in Groton and inquired about possibly receiving funds for that project. Representative Scarsdale responded by stating that the Governor is very committed to addressing climate change and believes it will continue to be a priority for the state.

Ms. Manugian said she understood that obtaining additional state funding was unlikely and that Groton needed more local funding. She inquired if there had been any discussion about reducing the implementation of newly mandated programs that the state requires towns to pay for. Ms. Manugian then asked for suggestions on how to have conversations with constituents and educate them about the local level not seeing funding for K- 12 grade. Senator Cronin said the state delegation is willing to help have these conversations, and if there are any areas for which they can help ease the burden, they are available to do so. Representative Sena said he believes there are gaps in the system, and they need to advocate for available grants. Dr. Chesson, GDRSD Superintendent, said she receives updates regularly regarding funding. She said if the schools are mandated early literacy programs, it could cost the district approximately \$500,000 and said it was unacceptable. Representative Sena said there is a redraft of the bill on early literacy, and hopefully, it will be supported. He said there needs to be a reform throughout the whole state. Dr. Chesson said she would like to have the opportunity to show data that it is working within the district.

Mr. Gary Green, a member of the Groton Finance Committee, suggested that the State Legislature give more power to the towns and regional school districts to control their expenses. This would allow them to avoid limiting the growth of revenue.

Representative Scarsdale said that as a former Select Board Chair of Pepperell, she knows firsthand how unfunded mandates, especially those affecting regional schools, can strangle towns and hurt small-town budgets. She believed it's important to examine these issues closely.

Mr. Cunningham said in Groton that three non-profit institutions are an important part of our community, but their exemptions from local property taxes are problematic. In Groton's case, as an example, the non-profit institutions provide housing and use local services and the school system without any contribution. Mr. Cunningham explained that a proposal before the Legislature would allow cities and towns to tax real estate holdings of non-profits holding over \$15 million in property valuation to be taxed for 25% of their assessed value. He said this would be helpful to Groton's budget. Representative Scarsdale asked if it was an opt-in. Mr. Haddad confirmed it was, and the town would have to go to a Town Meeting to opt into that law. He said this would allow municipalities to sign agreements with their non-profits to adjust that number. Mr. Haddad said Groton was looking at a \$5.5M override over the next three years, \$2.1M in Dunstable, and the Board is frequently asked why the local non-profits don't contribute more. Mr. Haddad works closely with the non-profits, and having legislation in place would be very helpful. Mr. Pisani mentioned that residents often contact him regarding the local Non-profit Schools. He appreciates the PILOTS that they give to the town. He believes that implementing the proposed legislation would have a lot of support and that the delegation's assistance is needed to achieve it. Mr. Pisani said that the proposed 25% tax on their assessed value would greatly help, and one non-profit has the potential to solve a lot of the town's issues. Senator Kennedy asked about the fiscal impact of the schools; Mr. Pisani stated that Lawrence Academy's assessed value was approximately \$50 million, and Groton School was roughly \$270 million. It is a significant amount of money that could benefit the town.

*Mr. Green left at this point in the meeting (7:00 pm), and the FinCom no longer had a quorum.*

Mr. Jake Lewon, Dunstable Advisory Board member, said if the override doesn't pass in Dunstable, they are at the point of devastation of the Community. Mr. Haddad asked about possibly amending Proposition 2½ to address inflation, a solution that would solve problems locally. He said any help would be greatly appreciated. Mr. Silva said there was a Commonwealth Magazine Article about the Newton Teacher strike, and it was about wanting to take care of employees, but the funding mechanism is broken, and there is no way out of it. He stated that Dunstable went for an Override last year and failed. He said cuts have been made, and they have been very creative and looking at all options; they are doing all they can. The way they are funding municipalities is not working. Mr. Silva said they were asking the delegation for help.

Dunstable Selectmen Member Mr. Kieran Meehan asked the delegation what could be done locally to get positive attention and relief. Senator Cronin suggested fostering commercial and economic growth. Small towns have an issue with their commercial zoning. Ms. Pine said that in Groton, there are a number of vacant, fully zoned commercial properties available, but nobody is buying them.

Mr. Haddad stated that six of the eight Nashoba Valley Tech communities are seeking Overrides. Ms. Pine emphasized the importance of understanding this information to explain to others that it is not a result of bad management.

Senator Kennedy stated that the state government will have a better understanding of how they will manage their budget by the end of March. He mentioned that smaller communities are struggling with Overrides of Proposition 2½ and would like the Ways and Means Committee to consider their challenges and come up with a solution. He also mentioned that the legislature currently has three bond bills, including an economic

development bill, which could possibly help the towns of Groton or Dunstable. He suggested that increasing commercial development along Route 113 in Dunstable could be helpful.

Mr. Haddad said he couldn't thank the Representatives enough for attending that evening and looks forward to continuing working with them. Senator Kennedy suggested to reconvene in the later part of March. Mr. Haddad thanked Dunstable and the School District for attending.

### **TOWN MANAGERS REPORT- CONTINUED**

#### **3. Review First Draft of the 2024 Spring Town Meeting Warrant**

Mr. Haddad provided the Board with the first draft of the 2024 Spring Town Meeting Warrant. He requested a few minutes to review the Warrant with the Board and informed them that it closed on February 9th at the end of business day. There are 27 articles, with one being a placeholder. A public hearing is scheduled on February 26<sup>th</sup> at the Groton Center, starting at 7:00 P.M., to discuss the Warrant. The articles are as follows:

Articles 1-4 will be presented as one Consent Motion.

**Article 1:** Hear Reports

**Article 2:** Elected Officials Compensation

**Article 3:** Wage and Classification Schedule

**Article 4:** Appropriate FY 2025 Contribution to the OPEB Trust Fund

**Article 5:** Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Operating Budget

**Article 6:** Fiscal Year 2025 Capital Budget

**Article 7:** Revoke Cable Enterprise Fund in Fiscal Year 2025- Mr. Haddad said they will eliminate it in FY25 and create a receipts reserve for the appropriation fund.

**Article 8:** PEG Access and Cable Realter Fund Acceptance

**Article 9:** Funding for Destination Groton Committee

**Article 10:** Funding for Sustainability Commission

**Article 11:** Community Preservation Funding Accounts

**Article 12:** Community Preservation Funding Recommendations

**Article 13:** TIFF-Mr. Haddad explained that this was a placeholder and that he would have more information regarding this at the public hearing.

**Article 14:** Extend Sewer District- looking to see if the Town will vote to extend the "Groton Center Sewer District" to add another property on Fairview Drive off.

**Article 15:** Extend Four Corners Sewer District- Mr. Haddad said this is a proposal for affordable housing at 797 Boston Road. The Sewer Commission added the article.

**Article 16:** Citizen's Petition- Return to Voice Vote or Voter Card Count at Town Meeting- This article proposes eliminating electronic voting and returning to voter card count at Town Meeting.

**Article 17:** Citizen's Petition- Set Statutory Speed Limit at 25 MPH- Ms. Manugian asked if there was an opinion of the Police Chief. Mr. Haddad said the Police Chief would support this. Mr. Haddad said roads with statutory speed limits are unaffected by this. Ms. Manugian requested a map showing roads impacted by 25 mph.

**Articles 18 through 27:** Mr. Haddad said these articles will be presented as one motion.

**Article 18:** Transfer Within the Water Enterprise Fund.

**Article 19:** Transfer Within the Sewer Enterprise Fund

**Article 20:** Transfer Within Cable Enterprise Fund- Mr. Haddad said there is still a Cable Enterprise Fund until June 30.

**Article 21:** Transfer within Cable Enterprise Fund

**Article 22:** Prior Year Bills

**Article 23:** Current Year Line-Item Transfers

**Article 24:** Appropriate Funding to Offset Snow and Ice Deficit

**Article 25:** Debt Service for the Middle School Track- Fiscal Year 2024

**Article 26:** Debt Service for the Middle School Track- Fiscal Year 2025

**Article 27:** Establishing Limits for Various Revolving Funds

#### **4. FY 2025 Budget Update**

Mr. Haddad said that regarding the FY 2025 Budget Update, he was pleased to report that the Finance Committee voted unanimously to recommend the FY 2025 Level Service Budget to the Town Meeting as submitted by the Town Manager. He explained that the Finance Committee decided to submit the budget to Town Meeting, with the motion contingent upon an Override of Proposition 2½. He stated that the Finance Committee would not bring forward a contingent budget if the override should fail. Mr. Haddad believes it is a good decision and is very pleased. If the override fails, they will have to go back to another Town Meeting and reconvene. Mr. Haddad wants the Select Board to be aware of their position going into Town Meeting. Ms. Manugian also supports this decision and believes it will put them in a much stronger position going into the Town Meeting. Mr. Haddad said the budget will not be voted by consent; it will be voted on section by section. Ms. Pine agreed that it was the right way to proceed.

#### **Approval of Minutes from February 5, 2024**

*Ms. Pine made a motion to approve the minutes of the regularly scheduled meeting from February 5, 2024, with a few minor amendments. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

The meeting was adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

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



**FINANCE COMMITTEE  
Meeting Minutes**

***APPROVED***

Monday, February 26, 2024 @ 7:00 P.M.  
The Center in Groton 163 W. Main St  
Meeting Jointly with the Select Board

**Present for the Finance Committee:** Bud Robertson, Chair; David Manugian, Colby Doody, Mary Linskey

Others Present: Mark Haddad, Town Manager; Patricia Dufresne, Asst Finance Director

At the conclusion of the public hearing on the Spring Town Meeting Warrant, the Finance Committee relocated to the back classroom to take positions on warrant articles and to conduct other business.

Positions on Warrant Articles:

**Article 1:** Hear Reports – The Finance Committee took no position on this article

**Article 2:** Elected Officials Compensation – The Finance Committee unanimously supports this article (with four members present)

**Article 3:** Wage & Classification Schedule – The Finance Committee unanimously supports this article (with four members present)

**Article 4:** FY25 OPEB Trust Contribution – The Finance Committee unanimously supports this article (with four members present)

**Article 5:** Town of Groton FY25 Operating Budget – The members briefly discussed the merits of proposing a 1-year versus a 3-year tax override. Mr. Robertson noted that the FinCom had already approved both the school district and municipal budgets, but had different opinions on the number of years that should be addressed in the tax override. Mr. Haddad said that was fine as Article 5 of the warrant authorizes spending only for a single year (FY25). The ballot question will be for \$5.5 million, and the budget previously approved by the FinCom was for one year, contingent on passage of an override. Mr. Robertson pointed out that if the tax override does not pass, deep budget cuts will have to be made, not only for FY25 but for the following year and the year after that. Soon, the town becomes a very different place to live. At the very least, keeping an eye on union negotiations and encouraging new revenue opportunities will be crucial in the upcoming years. The Finance Committee unanimously supports this article (with four members present).

**Article 6:** Capital Purchases – The group briefly discussed some of the planned equipment purchases to benefit the golf course. Mr. Manugian pointed out that the specialized mower attachments on the capital list permit effective course grooming on difficult terrain. He added that the General Manager has made the Club profitable but he needs the right tools to maintain all his progress. Mr. Robertson agreed that the course is in great shape but requires enormous upkeep. The members agreed that Mr. Campbell should be

given latitude on spending as long as revenues were covering costs. It was noted that the Capital Planning Committee has thoroughly vetted all items included in this article. The Finance Committee unanimously supports this article (with four members present).

**Article 7:** Revoke Cable Enterprise – The Finance Committee unanimously supports this article (with four members present).

**Article 8:** PEG Cable Access Receipts Reserve for Appropriation Fund – The Finance Committee unanimously supports this article (with four members present).

**Article 9:** Destination Groton Funding – The Finance Committee unanimously supports this article (with four members present).

**Article 10:** Sustainability Commission Funding - The Finance Committee unanimously supports this article (with four members present).

**Article 11:** CPC Funding Articles - The Finance Committee unanimously supports this article (with four members present).

**Article 12:** CPA Project Recommendations – The members noted that adding \$400k to the Conservation Trust keeps the balance of that fund in line with the guidelines stated in the town’s financial policies. While some members were unsure of what an “Outdoor Fitness Court” would look like, because the CPC approved the application, there was no need to second-guess the merits of the project. The members agreed that the Bancroft Castle is a particularly beautiful property and were pleased it would be preserved. The Finance Committee unanimously supports all projects recommended in this article (with four members present).

**Article 13:** Extend Central Sewer District - The Finance Committee took no position on this article.

**Article 14:** Extend Four Corners District - The Finance Committee took no position on this article.

**Article 15:** Citizens Petition Voice Vote - The Finance Committee took no position on this article.

**Article 16:** Citizens Petition Adj Speed Limits - The Finance Committee took no position on this article.

**Article 17:** Transfer E&D to Water Enterprise for FY24 - The Finance Committee unanimously supports this article (with four members present).

**Article 18:** Transfer E&D to Sewer Enterprise for FY24 - The Finance Committee unanimously supports this article (with four members present).

**Article 19:** Transfer E&D to Four Corners Enterprise for FY24 - The Finance Committee unanimously supports this article (with four members present).

**Article 20:** Transfer E&D to Cable Enterprise for FY24 - The Finance Committee unanimously supports this article (with four members present).

**Article 21:** Free Cash for Prior Year Bills - The Finance Committee unanimously supports this article (with four members present).

**Article 22:** FY24 Line-Item Transfers - The Finance Committee unanimously supports this article (with four members present).

**Article 23:** Offset Snow & Ice Deficit FY24 - The Finance Committee unanimously supports this article (with four members present).

**Article 24:** CPC Debt Service FY24 - The Finance Committee unanimously supports this article (with four members present).

**Article 25:** CPC Debt Service FY25 - The Finance Committee unanimously supports this article (with four members present).

**Article 26:** Set Limits on Revolving Funds FY25 - The Finance Committee unanimously supports this article (with four members present).

**FY25 Budget Vote** – Mr. Manugian, who was absent when the original vote was taken, added his support to the FY25 budget. With this amendment, the Finance Committee supports the FY25 Operating Budget unanimously (7-0-0).

**Meeting Minutes**

Ms. Linskey made a motion to approve the minutes from the regularly scheduled meeting of February 6, 2024. Mr. Manugian seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously. 4-0-0

Ms. Linskey made a motion to approve the minutes from the regularly scheduled meeting of January 27, 2024. Mr. Manugian seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously. 4-0-0

**Town Meeting Budget Presentation** - The members discussed the process for presenting and moving articles at the town meeting; this process will be different from recent years as each function of government will be moved and voted separately. Any member who wishes to present a particular motion was asked to let Mr. Robertson know of their preference.

**RFT Request** – Mr. Haddad requested a Reserve Fund Transfer in the amount of \$7,500. He explained that he was obliged to hire a building monitor to keep the senior center building safe and accessible when private groups are meeting there in the evenings. Unfortunately, he will not be able to charge a user fee (to offset the wage expense) until possibly next year. The \$7,500 will cover the wage expense for the remaining current fiscal year. **On a motion by Mr. Manugian, seconded by Mr. Doody, the Finance Committee voted unanimously to transfer \$7,500 from the Reserve Fund to COA General Expenses to cover costs of hiring a COA Building Monitor. The Vote: 4-0-0**

Mr. Robertson adjourned the meeting at 9:30 pm

Respectfully submitted:

Kara Cruikshank, Executive Assistant  
Patricia Dufresne, Assistant Finance Director

**SPRING TOWN MEETING WARRANT  
MARCH 26, 2024**

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-sixth day of March, 2024 at Seven O'clock in the evening, to consider all business other than the election of Town Officers and on the twenty-third day of April, 2024, between the hours of 7:00 A.M. and 8:00 P.M., at an adjourned session thereof at the following locations:

Precinct 1	The Groton Center 163 West Main Street	Precincts 2 & 3 Middle School South 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 One	Select Board	3 Years
Vote for One	Commissioner of Trust Funds	3 Years
Vote for Two	Groton-Dunstable Regional School Committee	3 Years
Vote for One	Groton Electric Light Commission	3 Years
Vote for One	Moderator	3 Years
Vote for One	Park Commission	3 Years
Vote for One	Park Commission	1 Year
Vote for Three	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
Vote for One	Groton Housing Authority	4 Years

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**	<b>Article 26:</b>	Establishing Limits for Various Revolving Funds	28
		Budget Report of the Town Manager and Finance Committee to Town Meeting	
		Appendix A – Fiscal Year 2025 Proposed Operating Budget	
		Appendix B – Fiscal Year 2025 Wage and Classification Schedule	

\*Will be presented as one Consent Motion

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

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**Article 1: Hear Reports**

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

**Select Board**

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

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

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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:**

**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 2025.*

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**Article 3: Wage and Classification Schedule**

To see if the Town will vote to amend and adopt for Fiscal Year 2025 the Town of Groton Wage and Classification schedule as shown in Appendix B of this Warrant, or to take any other action relative thereto.

**Select Board**  
**Town Manager**

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

**Summary:** *The purpose of this Article is to set the wage and classification schedule for the three (3) employees (Executive Assistant to the Town Manager, Human Resources Director and IT Director) covered by the Personnel Bylaw. Under the policy of the Select Board, these employees receive the same benefits as contained in the Town Supervisors' Union Contract. These employees will receive a 2% cost-of-living adjustment in Fiscal Year 2025.*

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**Article 4: *Appropriate FY 2025 Contribution to the OPEB Trust***

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

*Select Board  
Town Manager*

**Select Board:  
Finance Committee:**

**Summary:** *The purpose of this article is to fund the Town's OPEB Liability. The Select Board and Finance Committee have adopted a funding policy for this purpose. One of the funding goals is to commit to an annual appropriation to the Trust that would keep the Net Present Value Liability from growing until such time as the Town can begin to pay down the liability. In Fiscal Year 2025, 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 2025 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 (2025), 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 2025 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 2024 and thereafter, for the purpose of funding the Fiscal Year 2025 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 2025:*

**Item #1 – Extrication Tools – “Jaws of Life”                      \$92,500                      Fire and EMS**

**Summary:** *The current auto extrication tools “Jaws of Life” are approaching 15 years old. With a life expectancy of 10-15 years, these tools are at the tail end of their serviceable time which will require replacement. As the new car technologies and materials constantly evolve, older “jaws” simply do not have the power to cut some modern systems. These tools are primarily used for motor vehicle crashes, however, have applicable usages in the industrial or construction setting.*

**Select Board:  
Finance Committee:**

**Item #2 – Pick-Up Truck    \$55,000                      Highway**

**Summary:** *This is a scheduled replacement. The average life of a pick-up truck is approximately 7 years. By replacing one vehicle every couple of years, this will allow the fleet to stay in good shape. They are front line pick-ups used for day to day operations as well as snow plowing.*

**Select Board:  
Finance Committee:**



**Item #3 – Brush Mower/Field Mower**                      **\$70,000**                      **Highway**

**Summary:**    *This item is scheduled for replacement while it still has value. This should be considered a scheduled replacement.*

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

**Item #4 – Dump Truck**                                      **\$285,000**                      **Highway**

**Summary:**    *This item is a scheduled replacement. These vehicles are front line trucks responsible for plowing and sanding, as well as normal construction duties. The Town will borrow this amount of money and pay it off over five years.*

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

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

**Summary:**    *This item in the Capital Budget was established twelve years ago and has been very successful. In Fiscal Year 2025, the following items will be purchased/upgraded with this allocation: 10 replacement computers; Replace aging servers and storage arrays; Investment to expand the network and keep equipment and maintenance costs current; and network switch upgrades and increased wireless coverage and improve door lock and security system maintenance.*

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

**Item #6 – Municipal Building Repairs**                      **\$25,000**                      **Town Facilities**

**Summary:**    *This appropriation will be used to continue to maintain all municipal buildings by performing various maintenance activities to prevent major breakdowns in our municipal building infrastructure. Priorities continue to change when it comes to the minor repairs and upgrades in the Town's buildings. With a set line item which is separate from minor capital, the DPW can be flexible and change its priorities instead of just doing it because it is on a list. Furnaces, a/c units, flooring and painting are some of the small items this capital program could handle with the flexibility needed.*

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

**Item #7 – Police Station HVAC**

**\$65,000**

**Town Facilities**

**Summary:** *The current HVAC System at the Police Station is the original system from when the Building was constructed in 1999. In 2025 it will be almost 25 years old and in need of replacement. This should be considered a scheduled replacement.*

**Select Board:**

**Finance Committee:**

**Item #8 – Baler/Maintenance**

**\$25,000**

**Transfer Station**

**Summary:** *Due to a fire at the Transfer Station in June, 2021, the 2004 baler was replaced by a newer model with insurance funding. This has now allowed the Town to remove the purchase of a new baler from the capital plan. The money set aside for the baler in FY 2025 will be spent to overhaul and update the newer baler providing for a longer life and not require the Town to replace it for several more years.*

**Select Board:**

**Finance Committee:**

**Item #9 – Library**

**\$50,000**

**Library**

**Summary:** *All 20-year-old carpeting was replaced in 2018 EXCEPT in the Children's Room and Main Meeting Rooms, because they were already replaced in 2009. But these three large spaces are the busiest, most-used, and most stain-prone rooms. In FY2025, these carpets will be 15 years old (expected life 10 years). Carpet squares cost a bit more than broadloom, but make the most sense in such high traffic, high spill, highly busy crafting/activity/refreshment/programming meeting spaces. Despite regular cleaning, stains are visible all over the meeting rooms in particular. Carpet tiles can be replaced easily if stains cannot be removed or if fixed shelving or furniture is changed.*

**Select Board:**

**Finance Committee:**

**Item #10 – Property Improvements**

**\$50,000**

**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. Since FY 2015, the Town has appropriated \$25,000 each year so that 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 to much success. In FY 2025, the Park Commission has requested \$50,000 to deal with some substantial capital expenditures, including the Cow Pond Pump House coming in at a total expense of \$20,000-\$34,000. Another significant capital project is the paving work needed at Carol Wheeler Park, which has been quoted at \$11,500-\$11,900.*

**Select Board:**

**Finance Committee:**

**Item #11 – Police Cruisers**

**\$134,000**

**Police Department**

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

**Select Board:**

**Finance Committee:**

**Item #12 – Police Pick-Up Truck**

**\$77,000**

**Police Department**

**Summary:** *This piece of equipment will benefit the department in that, as a multi-purpose vehicle with a four wheel drive platform, it can be utilized for snow removal, specialized equipment transport, provide accessibility to remote areas, and it will give us the ability to evacuate people in emergencies. Also can be used to assist Emergency Management with transportation of generators and shelter equipment.*

**Select Board:**

**Finance Committee:**

**Item #13 – Electronic Control Devices – “Tasers”      \$12,500      Police Department**

**Summary:**      *Current Electronic Control Device (ECD, Taser) is at end-of-life and not serviceable. Axon products provide integrated data storage for both the ECD and future acquired Body-Worn-Cameras (BWC) . The total cost of the ECD replacement is \$97,796. The Police Department applied for and anticipate receiving a JAG grant in the amount of \$50,000. The Town would be responsible for 1 payment of \$12,500 and 4 annual installments of \$10,500 for a total cost to the town of \$49,000.*

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

**Item #14 – Golf Carts      \$25,553      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.*

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

**Item #15 – Greens Equipment - Ventrac      \$10,918      Country Club**

**Summary:**      *The Country Club needs to replace its aging equipment. Some pieces age better than others and the Club attempts to use all the equipment until repairing it becomes cost prohibitive. The greens superintendent and course mechanic will determine the items needed most.*

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

**Item #16 – Greens Equipment – Hauler Pro X      \$20,000      Country Club**

**Summary:**      *A superintendent utility cart to replace one of the carts that is currently uses to travel the course for maintenance. The current carts are over a decade old and are becoming unreliable.*

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

**Item #17 – Greens Equipment – Truckster XD      \$13,500      Country Club**

**Summary:**      *A heavy payload 4x4 utility cart that will allow the course maintenance staff to transfer up to 3,500 lbs. of debris, sand, loom to areas of the course.*

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

**Item #18 – Ventrac Attachments**

**\$18,000**

**Country Club**

**Summary:** *The Ventrac unit is an attachment driven unit. The following attachments would be very useful for maintenance on the course. Stump Grinder – Focusing on clearly out dead trees and overgrown areas of the course. The stump grinder will allow maintenance staff to remove enough stump to clear the area and in some cases reseed. Tough Cut Deck – This deck will allow maintenance staff to cut back all the overgrown areas of the course. Trencher – This attachment will allow maintenance staff to install new irrigation lines on the course.*

**Select Board:**

**Finance Committee:**

**Item #19 – Greens Equipment – Greens Mower**

**\$10,000**

**Country Club**

**Summary:** *This item will replace the current greens mower. Old mower will be converted to a tee & collar unit, the old tee & collar unit will be converted to a greens roller unit. Ideally, the Club will purchase a new mower every five years.*

**Select Board:**

**Finance Committee:**

**Item #20 – HVAC**

**\$23,000**

**Country Club**

**Summary:** *The Club has been installing one AC unit per year into the Function Hall and Tavern Building. This request will complete the process of ultimately having 5 units in the Function Hall and two units in the Tavern Building.*

**Select Board:**

**Finance Committee:**

**Item #21 – Building Repairs & Painting**

**\$20,000**

**Country Club**

**Summary:** *This funding will be used to paint the exterior of the Golf Shop, replace trim boards. Install rubber flooring for the high traffic area inside the golf shop. In addition, it will also be used to replace the deck outside of the Golf Shop.*

**Select Board:**

**Finance Committee:**

**Item #22 – Function Hall Bathroom Repairs                      \$10,000                      Country Club**

**Summary:**     *This funding will be used to install hand driers in the function hall bathrooms, as well as repaint both bathrooms in the function hall, and replace the partitions in the function hall bathrooms.*

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

**Item #23 – Retaining Walls    \$15,000                      Country Club**

**Summary:**     *Using the same blocks that were installed several years ago for the pool perimeter, the Country Club will replace the stone wall next to the deck at the Tavern Building and add a small section that has been experiencing washout next to the Tavern Building.*

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

**Town Manager**

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**Article 7:        Revoke Cable Enterprise Fund in Fiscal Year 2025**

To see if the Town will revoke the provisions of Chapter 44, §53F½ of the Massachusetts General Laws, ceasing the Community Cable Department as an enterprise fund effective in Fiscal Year 2025, or to take any other action relative thereto.

**Town Manager**

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

**Summary:**     *At the 2015 Spring Town Meeting, the Town voted to create a Cable Enterprise Fund for Fiscal Year 2016. At the time, Cable Revenues were strong and had a healthy level of reserves. However, since 2019, more residents have moved away from cable to the various streaming services and the Town has seen a steady decrease in Cable Fees and the Cable Enterprise has had to depend more on its Excess and Deficiency Account to balance the budget. There are no longer enough reserves to continue functioning as an Enterprise. To address this and determine the best course of action to continue to provide Local Cable Access while dealing with the loss of revenues, in Fiscal Year 2025, the Town will create a “Cable Department Receipts Reserved for Appropriation Fund”. Creation of this fund, similar to the Ambulance Receipts Reserved for Appropriation Fund, will allow the Town to collect the fees received from the two cable carriers servicing Groton and put them in this Reserve Account for the exclusive use of the Local Cable Access Department. This Article will revoke the Enterprise Fund. Article 8 will create the Receipts Reserved for Appropriation Fund.*

**Article 8: PEG Access and Cable Related Fund Acceptance**

To see if the Town will accept Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, §53F¾, which establishes a special revenue fund known as the PEG Access and Cable Related Fund, to reserve cable franchise fees and other cable-related revenues for appropriation to support PEG access services and oversight and renewal of the cable franchise agreement, the fund to begin operation for Fiscal Year 2025I which begins on July 1, 2024, or to take any other action relative thereto.

**Town Manager**

**Select Board:**

**Finance Committee:**

**Summary:** *See explanation in the Article 7 Summary.*

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**Article 9: 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 2024 and thereafter, for the purpose of providing funding for the Destination Groton Committee to carry out the Charge of the Committee and all costs associated and related thereto, or to take any other action relative thereto.

**Destination Groton Committee**

**Select Board:**

**Finance Committee:**

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

---

**Article 10: Funding for Sustainability Commission**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, and/or borrow pursuant to any applicable statute, a sum or sums of money, to be expended by the Town Manager, for the purpose of providing funding for the Sustainability Commission to carry out the

Charge of the Committee and all cost associated and related thereto, or to take any other action relative thereto.

**Sustainability Commission**

**Select Board:**

**Finance Committee:**

**Summary:** *The purpose of this Article is to provide funding for the Sustainability Commission to pay for their tire recycling program, climate action program, pollinator garden program, building and delivering trained energy coaching and a central, online repository of information for townspeople, Sustainable Groton Advocates citizens' program, and to 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 \$9,600 for the above-mentioned activities in FY 2025.*

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**Article 11: Community Preservation Funding Accounts**

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

CPC Operating Expenses:	\$ 22,500
Open Space Reserve:	\$106,250
Historic Resource Reserve:	\$106,250
Community Housing Reserve:	\$106,250
Unallocated Reserve:	\$721,250

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 2025. Except for the CPC Operating Expenses, none of these funds will be spent without additional approval at Town Meeting.*



**Article 12: Community Preservation Funding Recommendations**

To see if the Town will vote to adopt and approve the recommendations of the Community Preservation Committee for Fiscal Year 2025, 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: Conservation Fund – FY 2025 \$400,000**

**Summary:** *The Conservation Commission is requesting \$400,000.00 to be added to Groton’s Conservation Fund in order to preserve land for open space, agricultural recreation, and forestry activities, as well as, to protect water resources and wildlife habitat. The Conservation Fund allows the Town to move quickly when 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 within Groton. To Fund this Project, \$100,000 will come from the Open Space Reserve and \$300,000 coming from the Unallocated Reserve.*

**Select Board:  
Finance Committee:  
Community Preservation Committee:**

**CPC Proposal B: Cow Pond Play Fields \$30,000**

**Summary:** *The Park Commission is requesting \$30,000.00 to design a master plan for the large area owned by the Town of Groton between Cow Pond Brook Road and Hoyts Wharf Road. The area is currently used by athletic groups and residents. This proposal will utilize the data and site assessments conducted using previously approved CPA funds in 2022 and build upon it to create the master plan and concept design. The Park Commission will also incorporate input provided through a survey of Town residents. The full amount to be paid from the Unallocated Reserve.*

**Select Board:  
Finance Committee:  
Community Preservation Committee:**

**CPC Proposal C: Milestone Markers Restoration \$10,000**

**Summary:** *The Groton Historical Commission is requesting \$10,000 to restore 2 of the 27 milestone markers that radiate from Main Street, leading to the Town center. The stones are historical assets, having been installed in approximately 1902. The project will fund the necessary restoration of damaged milestone markers. The full amount to be paid from the Historic Reserve.*

**Select Board:**  
**Finance Committee:**  
**Community Preservation Committee:**

**CPC Proposal D: Sustainable Groton Funding \$2,400**

**Summary:** *The Sustainability Commission is requesting \$2,400.00 in order to create and plant a native plant pollinator corridor along the back of the Groton Center property. The 80-foot-long planting pathway will connect the pollinator garden to the Ice Line Trail. The pollinator corridor will consist of a pedestrian walkway with a boarder of native pollinator plants and benches. The pollinator habitats at the Groton Center help to offset the loss of habitat and support sustainable environments, contributing to biodiversity. The full amount to be paid from the Open Space Reserve.*

**Select Board:**  
**Finance Committee:**  
**Community Preservation Committee:**

**CPC Proposal E: Prescott School Building Assessment \$100,000**

**Summary:** *The Groton Town Manager, in conjunction with the Capital Planning Advisory Committee and the Friends of Prescott, are proposing to perform a building condition assessment report for the Prescott School, located at 145 Main Street, to determine the functional adequacy of the primary facilities in the short- and long-term future to preserve the historic structure. The full amount to be paid from the Historic Reserve.*

**Select Board:**  
**Finance Committee:**  
**Community Preservation Committee:**

**CPC Proposal F: Outdoor Fitness Court \$237,500**

**Summary:** *In the Spring of 2023, the Town of Groton applied for and received a \$50,000 2024 Blue Cross Blue Shield Massachusetts Fitness Campaign Grant Award. This Campaign is part of a national movement to make world-class fitness free and accessible in public spaces across the country. The National Fitness Campaign (NFC) is a for-profit wellness consulting firm. NFC's mission is to make "world class fitness free" to support healthy communities across America. This grant provides seed funding for the construction/installation of an Outdoor Fitness Court. Working cooperatively with the*



**CPC Proposal J:                    2023-2024 Housing Funding Request                    \$400,000**

**Summary:**    *The Affordable Housing Trust is requesting \$400,000.00 to be transferred to the AHT to be spent on all allowable community housing purposes. Community Housing Funds can be used to acquire, create, support, rehabilitate and/or restore affordable housing if acquired or created with CPA funds. This application is the second annual application for CPA funds to support the Affordable Housing Trust in its work for the Town of Groton to create and support affordable housing. The full amount to be paid from the Community Housing Reserve.*

**Select Board:  
Finance Committee:  
Community Preservation Committee:**

**CPC Proposal K:                    Housing Coordinator – FY 2025                    \$62,659**

**Summary:**    *This application is requesting \$62,659 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 L:                    Tools and Equipment for Building Trails                    \$11,640**

**Summary:**    *The Groton Trails Committee is requesting \$11,275 to purchase needed special tools and equipment for them to conduct their work. While it's not associated with any particular trail construction project(s), the special tools and equipment will be used to improve the Committee's overall efficiency, and thereby its capacity, for building, repairing, and enhancing trails in the Groton Trail Network (GTN). The GTN comprises trails on land owned by nonprofits (Groton Conservation Trust, New England Forestry Foundation), the Town of Groton (Groton Conservation Commission), and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (Department of Conservation and Recreation). The CPA Funds will be used to build, repair (for safety and/or erosion control) and enhance (for safety and/or new users) trails that are used by the public. To Fund this Project, \$5,000 will come from the Open Space Reserve and \$6,640 coming from the Unallocated Reserve.*

**Select Board:  
Finance Committee:  
Community Preservation Committee:**

**Community Preservation Committee**

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**Article 13: TIF Article**

PLACE HOLDER

**Town Manager**

**Select Board:**

**Finance Committee:**

**Summary:**

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**Article 14: Extend Center Sewer District**

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 Assessors' Map 115, Lot 25-0 (6 Fairway Drive) but only for the exclusive use of 6 Fairway Drive, 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, 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:**

**Summary:** *This article requests authorization from the Town Meeting to expand the Center Sewer District to include 6 Fairway Drive, Groton. This article, if approved, will make Sewer available for the exclusive use of 6 Fairway Drive.*

**Article 15: Extend Four Corner Sewer District**

To see if the Town will vote to extend the "Four Corners Sewer District", as established by the vote under Article 12 of the 2015 Spring Town Meeting, to include the property shown on Assessors' Map 133, Lot 49-0 (797 Boston Road) but only for the exclusive use of 797 Boston Road, 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, 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:**

**Summary:** *This article requests authorization from the Town Meeting to expand the Four Corners Sewer District to include 797 Boston Road, Groton. This article, if approved, will make Sewer available for the exclusive use of 797 Boston Road.*

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**Article 16: Citizens' Petition -- Return to Voice Vote or Voter Card Count at Town Meeting**

To see if the Town will vote to no longer use electronic voting and instead revert back to voice and voter card count at Town Meetings, or to take any other action relative thereto.

**Citizens' Petition**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>
Guy L. Alberghini	215 Main Street	Tom Sweeny	53 Northwoods Road
Richard Chiriboga	460 Lowell Road	Pamela Wolfe	423 Lost Lake Drive
Bryan Richard	22 Winding Way	Judy Craig	220 Hemlock Park Drive
Eric Hillenberg	87 Northwoods Road	Robert Melvin	231 Mill Street
Raymond Roy	38 Ridgewood Ave	Karen Boucher	38 Ridgewood Avenue

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

**Summary:** The following summary was prepared by the petitioners and represents their view on the Article: *At the current time votes are entered into the voting system by way of clickers. When a petition needs to be passed by either a simple majority vote or two thirds of the vote did it really pass? For example say there are 200 votes. For a simple majority 101 votes would be needed to pass. Inside*

the system recognizes that 200 votes had been cast and needs 101 to pass. If the system only got 75 yes as well as 125 no votes. In less than a second the software will calculate that it needs 26 more to pass. The software will then reconfigure the vote results to show 101 yes votes and 99 no votes and look like it passed. If this petition is passed, the votes at Town Meeting will bring back the voice vote as well as the vote by raising the card.

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**ARTICLES 17 THROUGH 26 WILL BE PART OF THE CONSENT AGENDA. PLEASE SEE EXPLANATION PROVIDED ON PAGE 2 OF THIS WARRANT.**

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**Article 17: 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 2024 Water Department Operating Budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

**Board of Water Commissioners**

**Select Board:  
Finance Committee:**

**Summary:** This article will request a transfer of funds from Water Surplus to help fund the Fiscal Year 2024 Water Department's Operational Expenses. As of the printing of the Warrant, it is anticipated that \$\_\_\_\_,\_\_\_\_ will be transferred for this purpose.

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**Article 18: 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 2024 Center Sewer Enterprise Department Budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

**Board of Sewer Commissioners**

**Select Board:  
Finance Committee:**

**Summary:** This article allows the Sewer Department to transfer money from its surplus account to cover any deficit in the Fiscal Year 2024 Center Sewer Budget. As of the printing of the Warrant, it is anticipated that \$\_\_\_\_,\_\_\_\_ will be transferred for this purpose.

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**Article 19: 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 2024 Four Corners Sewer Enterprise Department Budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

**Board of Sewer Commissioners**

**Select Board:**

**Finance Committee:**

**Summary:** *This article allows the Sewer Department to transfer money from its surplus account to cover any deficit in the Fiscal Year 2024 Four Corners Sewer Budget. As of the printing of the Warrant, it is anticipated that \$\_\_\_\_,\_\_\_\_ will be transferred for this purpose.*

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**Article 20: 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 2024 Cable Enterprise Department Budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

**Cable Advisory Committee**

**Select Board:**

**Finance Committee:**

**Summary:** *This article allows the Cable Advisory Committee to transfer money from its surplus account to cover any deficit in the Fiscal Year 2024 budget. As of the Printing of the Warrant, it is anticipated that \$\_\_\_\_,\_\_\_\_ will be transferred for this purpose.*

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**Article 21: Prior Year Bills**

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

**Select Board**

**Select Board:**

**Finance Committee:**



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

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**Article 22: *Current Year Line-Item Transfers***

To see if the Town will vote to transfer certain sums of money within the Fiscal Year 2024 budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

***Select Board***

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

**Summary:** *To transfer money within the Fiscal Year 2024 Budget should the need arise. A handout explaining any necessary transfers will be available at Town Meeting.*

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**Article 23: *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 2024 Snow and Ice Budget, as approved under Article 5 of the 2023 Spring Town Meeting, or to take any other action relative thereto.

***Town Manager***

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

**Summary:** *This article will allow the Town to fund any deficit in the Snow and Ice Account in FY 24.*

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**Article 24: Debt Service for Middle School Track – Fiscal Year 2024**

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 9 of the April 30, 2022 Spring Town Meeting, or to take any other action relative thereto.

**Community Preservation Committee**

**Select Board:**

**Finance Committee:**

**Summary:** *This Article appropriates the debt service payment for the Middle School Track Project. Article 9 of the April 30, 2022 Spring Town Meeting appropriated and additional \$1,000,000 for the project. Using FY 2024 Funds, the Community Preservation Committee will pay \$120,000 (all towards the principal) in debt service. In addition, they will pay an additional \$20,000 towards un-borrowed principal. To fund this appropriation, \$120,000 will come from the Fiscal Year 2024 Unallocated Reserve and \$20,000 will come from the Fiscal Year 2024 Open Space Reserve.*

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**Article 25: Debt Service for Middle School Track – Fiscal Year 2025**

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 2025 for the Middle School Track Project, as authorized under Article 7 of the May 1, 2021 Spring Town Meeting, or to take any other action relative thereto.

**Community Preservation Committee**

**Select Board:**

**Finance Committee:**

**Summary:** *This Article appropriates the debt service payment for the Middle School Track Project. Article 7 of the May 21, 2021 Spring Town Meeting appropriated \$1,405,374 for the project. In FY 2025, the Community Preservation Committee will pay \$238,914 in debt service (\$175,672 in principal payment and \$63,242 in interest payment) for this appropriation. To fund this appropriation the entire amount will come from the Unallocated Reserve.*

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**Article 26: 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 2025 spending limits for the various revolving funds as follows:

Program or Purpose	FY 2025 Spending Limit
Stormwater Management	\$20,000
Conservation Commission	\$50,000
Building Rental Fund	\$50,000
Affordable Housing Marketing	\$20,000
Home Recycling Equipment	\$10,000
Access for Persons with Disabilities	\$10,000
Council on Aging Program Fund	\$30,000
Boat Excise Tax Fund	\$ 5,000
Transfer Station Glass	\$20,000
Drug Forfeiture Fund	\$20,000
Senior Center Fitness Equipment	\$10,000
Center Building Monitor	\$20,000

or take any other action relative thereto.

**Town Manager**

**Select Board:**

**Finance Committee:**

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