

**SELECT BOARD / FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2026
S.B. APPROVED /FINCOM APPROVED**

Select Board Members Present: Matt Pisani, Chair; Becky Pine, Vice Chair; Alison Manugian, Clerk; Peter Cunningham; John Reilly;

Finance Committee Members Present: Bud Robertson, Chair; Mary Linskey, Vice Chair; David Manugian; Scott Whitefield; Kristina Lengyel;

Finance Committee Members Absent: Jamie McDonald and Gary Green

Also Present: Mark Haddad, Town Manager; Kara Cruikshank, Executive Assistant to the Town Manager; Patricia DuFresne, Assistant Finance Director/Town Accountant; Megan Foster, Principal Assessor; Katie Kazanjian, Treasurer/Tax Collector; Melisa Doig, Human Resources Director.

Chair Pisani called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and reviewed the agenda.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Robertson announced that he, Mr. Haddad, Member Reilly, and the Friends of Prescott met to review the Friends of Prescott year-end financials and programming. He explained that their revenues increased by 4% to 5% over the last year and they are projecting 15% growth next year. Mr. Robertson suggested that the Friends attend a Select Board meeting to provide a report.

Town Accountant/Assistant Finance Director Ms. Patricia DuFresne provided an update on the Opioid Working Group. She said an opioid abatement collaborative has been formed by the Towns of Groton, Ayer, Shirley, Pepperell, Bolton, Littleton, and Harvard. She said all funds are pooled to maximize their efforts. The RFP, to receive proposals to assist in developing programs to expend the funds, is now drafted and ready for release. Ms. DuFresne explained that the collaborative will meet next week to review and finalize the RFP. The IMA, which has been executed, stipulates that all monitoring of the RFP must be accomplished by an Advisory Board, not the Working Group. Each Town must appoint two individuals to the Advisory Board. She said Groton has nominated Mr. Peter Balvanz and Mr. Gregg Baker to serve as Advisory Board members representing the Town of Groton. Ms. DuFresne said they bring significant industry knowledge to this Board. She will keep the Board informed once a consultant is chosen.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

None

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. FY 2027 Budget Update.

Mr. Haddad updated the Board on the release of Governor Maura Healey's Proposed Budget for FY 2027, known as House 1. He expressed his frustration and disappointment that Governor Healey is not supporting municipalities and local school departments/districts. After the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) pushed to increase Unrestricted General Government Aid (UGGA), Mr. Haddad described the Governor's proposal to increase local Aid as anemic; a minor increase of two and one-half percent (2 ½%) in UGGA. Mr. Haddad is carrying a two (2%) increase in the Town

Manager’s Proposed Budget; the extra half of a percent will add approximately \$20,000 to new revenues for FY 2027. Mr. Haddad is also displeased with the Governor's proposal for the Chapter 70 increase for hold-harmless School Districts, which includes a \$ 75-per-student increase. He said that \$75 per student is half of what was approved last year and what the Groton-Dunstable Regional School District Superintendent is carrying in his initial budget (an increase of \$150 per student). Mr. Haddad emphasized that Governor Healey remains tone-deaf to the needs of municipalities and is no friend to the Town of Groton and the cities and towns of Massachusetts. Mr. Haddad said he will continue to lobby the Legislature for more Aid.

2. Select Board Meeting Schedule through the 2026 Spring Town Meeting.

Monday, February 9, 2026 -	Squannacook Dam Discussion
Tuesday, February 10, 2026-	Meet in Joint Session with the Finance Committee
Monday, February 16, 2026 -	No Meeting – (President’s Day Holiday)
Monday, February 23, 2026 -	First Review of 2026 Town Meeting Warrant
Monday, March 2, 2026 -	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, March 9, 2026 -	2026 Town Meeting Warrant Public Hearing
Monday, March 16, 2026 -	No Meeting
Monday, March 23, 2026 -	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, March 30, 2026	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, April 6, 2026 -	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, April 13, 2026 -	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, April 20, 2026 -	No Meeting – (Patriots’ Day Holiday)
Saturday, May 2, 2026 -	2026 Spring Town Meeting

ITEMS FOR SELECT BOARD CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL

1. Approve FloRo/PFAS Bond and BAN Issues.

Treasurer/Tax Collector Katie Kazanjian was present for the discussion on approving the recent Bond Anticipation Notes (BAN) and General Obligation Bonds (GOB). Mr. Haddad highlighted that the Town's AAA Bond Rating continues to provide very low interest rates for Groton’s taxpayers. The BAN, totaling \$4,592,980, covers various projects, including the remaining amount for the Florence Roche Elementary School (\$2.1 million), the Middle School Track, the Ambulance, the Dump Truck, SCBA, and a few Water Department Projects. The lowest bid for the BAN went to Truist Securities Inc. of Charlotte, NC, with a Net Interest Cost of \$107,338 (2.337%).

For the GOB, which addresses costs for the Florence Roche Project (\$24 million) and a portion of the PFAS debt (\$4,580,000) not covered by the State Revolving Fund (SRF), twenty firms submitted bids for the loan. Mr. Haddad said the winning bid was from Bancroft Capital, LLC of Fort Washington, Pennsylvania, with a premium of \$2,363,843. He said that after paying borrowing costs, the True Interest Cost (TIC) on the loan is 3.314890%. Mr. Haddad noted that the Town will receive \$28,580,000, with only \$26,525,000 to be repaid. The Board received the bid results and the necessary vote for approval.

Ms. Pine made a motion to authorize the sale of the Bonds and Ban, as outlined in the votes in the packet. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Consider Approving a One-Day All Alcoholic Beverage License for the Nashoba Valley Chamber of Commerce for the Annual Taste of Nashoba Valley to be held on Tuesday, March 24, 2026, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the One-Day All Alcoholic Beverages License for the Nashoba Valley Chamber of Commerce for the Annual Taste of Nashoba Valley to be held on Tuesday, March 24, 2026, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

On-Going Issues

- A. PFAS Issue – Congresswoman Lori Trahan contacted Mr. Haddad to inform him that the Town has received a \$1 million federal earmark submitted for the towns of Pepperell and Dunstable for the PFAS Watermain Project. Mr. Haddad thanked the Congresswoman for her efforts.
- B. UMass Satellite Emergency Facility – None
- C. Fire Department Staffing – The Select Board will hold a joint meeting with the Finance Committee on Tuesday, February 10th, to discuss staffing.
- D. West Groton Dam- Bids are due on Thursday, February 2nd, at 10:00 a.m. Mr. Haddad believes they will receive several bids.
- E. Main Street Study - MDM Transportation Consultants have been hired to conduct a full study of the section of Main Street under the Town’s control. This study will include traffic counts, parking spaces, crosswalks and an analysis of all intersections on Main Street. Mr. Haddad explained that he will form a Working Group for the initial review, and then the study will be turned over to the Complete Streets Committee for public hearings. He also explained that to conduct the traffic counts, they will need to install cameras on Main Street, whose sole purpose will be to conduct traffic counts. No other information, including recording license plates, etc. will be obtained. He wanted to make sure the public is aware of these cameras and their purpose. Mr. Haddad would like the intersections of Main Street at Boston Road, Route 40, Station Ave, and Hollis Street be the main focus of the study. MDM believes the study will take approximately 6 months. Mr. Haddad will continue to update the Board as they receive updates.

Mr. Haddad said that during his weekly meeting with Member Pine, they discussed grants and those the Town has received over the past two years. Assistant Town Accountant Katie Berry compiled a list of grants received over the past two fiscal years into a spreadsheet. Mr. Haddad shared that the Town has received over \$5.8 million in FY25 and FY26 (see included with these minutes). He felt this was important information to share with the public. While it will not reduce taxes, these grants have allowed the Town to do more without needing additional revenues from the Town.

SELECT BOARD LIASON REPORTS

None

7:00 p.m.- In Joint Session with the Finance Committee- Presentation of the Town Manager's Proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Operating Budget.

Mr. Robertson called the Finance Committee to order.

Mr. Haddad explained that this was his eighteenth Proposed Operating Budget as Groton's Town Manager. He said the Fiscal Year 2027 Proposed Operating Budget was developed against the backdrop of two consecutive years in which voters declined to approve operating overrides, requiring the Town to make significant reductions to both the municipal budget and the Operating Assessment for the Groton-Dunstable Regional School District. The development of the proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Budget has required continued transparency, cooperation, and fiscal discipline among the Select Board, Finance Committee, Department Heads, and the School District. Mr. Haddad said he was very proud of the effort and of their relationship with the Groton-Dunstable Regional School District, and that it was a pleasure to work with them. Mr. Haddad was happy to present the Budget to the Finance Committee and the Select Board. (The complete PowerPoint Presentation is included in these minutes.)

The PowerPoint Presentation reviewed the Budget Guidance given to the Town Manager by the Select Board and the Finance Committee. The Guidance to the Town Manager was:

- The Town Manager shall provide a Balanced Budget with no consideration of an Override for Fiscal Year 2027. Any Municipal Spending increase shall be kept to no more than forty (40%) percent of anticipated new revenues for Fiscal year 2027. The remaining new revenues shall be set aside for the Fiscal Year 2027 Proposed Operating Assessment of the Groton Dunstable Regional School District.
- The Town Manager shall provide a complete listing/summary of any reductions to the Budget to comply with this Guidance.

The budget process and development were outlined in the presentation. Based on the final fiscal year 2026 levy limit of \$39,607,199, the tax levy will increase by \$990,180 in FY 2027. The estimate for New Growth is \$21.5 million, resulting in an additional \$317,770 in tax revenue, bringing the total increase in the tax levy to \$1,307,950. Ms. Foster, the Principal Assessor, is concerned because \$21.5 million in New Growth is the highest amount proposed at this stage. Mr. Haddad said that growth has slowed as the economy has, making this estimate a stretch. Local Receipts are estimated to increase by \$255,975, and other available funds are estimated to increase by \$10,199.

Mr. Haddad reviewed the Revenue Projections and the calculation of the FY 2027 Levy Limit and said that the expected limit is \$40,915,149. When adding excluded debt (including FloRo and PFAS water line debt), the total tax levy is approximately \$47,081,393.

The estimated revenue sources are as follows:

- State Aid: 2%
- Motor Vehicle Excise Tax: \$1,985,902
- General Revenues of the Town: \$3,899,300

- Free Cash: \$501,164
- Other Available Funds: \$360,199

This brings the total estimated revenues to \$7,952,941.

Mr. Haddad noted that the Finance Team anticipates a 3.42% increase in new revenues for Fiscal Year 2027, totaling \$1,597,678. The 40/60 split is 40% for Municipal Operations (\$639,071) and 60% for the GDRSD Assessment (\$958,607).

Mr. Haddad provided a Budget Summary to the Select Board and Finance Committee, highlighting the following:

- A total of \$224,951 in FY 2027 due to COLA and performance incentives, salaries, and wages for employees.
- An increase in excluded Debt due to the Florence Roche Elementary School Project
- FY 2027 will be the first year the Town will be paying Debt Service on the PFAS Waterline Project, broken into two issues.
- The first issue is the SRF Debt of the original Project in the amount of \$11,586,118 and the second is the \$4,584,086 for the next phase of the project. This debt will be offset by payments from the Town of Dunstable and the Groton Water Department totaling \$169,244.
- Excluded Debt will increase in FY 2027 by approximately \$1 million.
- Debt within the Levy will stay stable at \$253,894.

The Proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Municipal Budget is \$18,129,907.

The Regional School District faces significant challenges for FY 2027. Following two consecutive failed overrides in Groton to fund the District's Operational Assessment, the District's ability to continue providing quality education for Groton's children has been severely impacted. The current proposal is 6.46% higher than FY 2026 and exceeds the revenue capacity of both Groton and Dunstable. Mr. Haddad reviewed some of the cost drivers for the Groton-Dunstable Regional School District. The Town Manager's Proposed Operating Budget includes an increase of approximately \$1.2 million in the Operating Assessment, or 4.32 percent. Mr. Haddad noted that even with this increase, the School District will face a projected operating deficit of approximately \$1.35 million. Preliminary information from the Nashoba Valley Regional Technical School District indicates that the number of students for FY27 remains unchanged. Mr. Haddad clarified that this is not included in the Guidance.

The impacts of meeting the Municipal Government reduction guidance totaled approximately \$234,374, and Mr. Haddad reviewed the breakdown by department. Over the past three fiscal years, the School District has reduced staffing by 35.5 FTEs, resulting in approximately \$2.7 million in budget cuts. In FY 2027, a reduction of 7 to 10 FTEs has been proposed (the exact positions to be determined). Mr. Haddad then reviewed the School District's reductions for FY 2027. Mr. Manugian asked Mr. Haddad to reach out to the District to find out when student services will be significantly affected by the budget cuts over the last three years. Ms. Pine is interested in determining the percentage of full-time equivalents (FTEs) reduced over the past three years. Mr. Haddad said he would reach out to Superintendent Dr. Bruno and invite the

School District to the joint meeting with the Finance Committee scheduled for Saturday, February 28th. The Select Board and Finance Committee questioned the per-pupil cost between the Groton-Dunstable Regional School District and the Nashoba Valley Technical Regional School Districts. Mr. Haddad will also invite Nashoba Tech Superintendent Denise Pigeon to the meeting on Saturday, February 28th, to discuss their budget.

Mr. Haddad reviewed the Proposed Major Initiatives, which would cost a total of \$1,312,913. The Capital Budget will be discussed at the February 28th meeting. Ms. Manugian asked Mr. Haddad to place an asterisk next to the items in the Capital Budget that are already obligations. He will provide the Board with the requested information.

Enterprise Funds were reviewed, and Mr. Haddad said the Water Department implemented a rate increase to meet its obligation. He noted that he will propose a \$10 rate increase for the Stormwater Enterprise to fund the administrative assistant's salary, raising the rate from \$60 to \$70.

Mr. Haddad said he is proud of the work done on the municipal budget. The total budget is \$18,129,907, or an increase of 1.99%. The grand total of the Town Budget is an increase of 5.73%.

The final slide outlined the anticipated tax impact. Mr. Haddad explained the impact of the tax rate. The levy capacity is set by Proposition 2 ½. The estimated tax bill within the levy will increase from \$13.09 to \$13.44, or an increase of 2.67% (\$266 in the average tax bill). When taking into consideration excluded debt, the overall tax rate will increase by \$0.68 from \$14.78 to \$15.46, with an overall estimated tax bill increase of \$518.

Mr. Haddad looks forward to the meeting on February 28th to discuss this in more depth. Mr. Haddad stated that the state is not funding education as it should be. The Town of Dunstable includes in its budget the match for Groton's \$1.2M. He also stated that the Town has a strong relationship with the School Administration and with Dunstable Town Administrator Jason Silva. He said that it is good teamwork.

Mr. Haddad thanked the Finance Committee and Select Board for their time.

Approval of the Regularly Scheduled Meeting of January 26, 2026

Mr. Cunningham made a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of January 26, 2026. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The Select Board and Finance Committee adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

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

TOWN OF GROTON FISCAL YEAR 2027

TOWN MANAGER'S
PROPOSED OPERATING
BUDGET



1



PROCESS

- This is the eighteenth Proposed Operating Budget I have submitted as Groton's Town Manager.
- The Fiscal Year 2027 Proposed Operating Budget has been developed against the backdrop of two consecutive years in which voters declined to approve operating overrides, requiring the Town to make significant reductions to both the municipal budget and the Operating Assessment for the Groton-Dunstable Regional School District.
- The development of the proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Budget has required a continued level of transparency, cooperation, and fiscal discipline among Select Board, Finance Committee, Department Heads, and the School District.



2

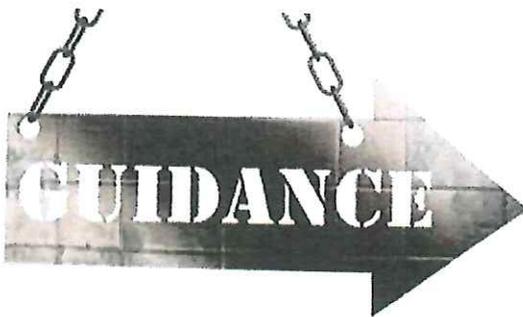
PROCESS

Difficult decisions were unavoidable, and every effort has been made to balance fiscal responsibility with the community's expectations for core services.

This budget reflects a commitment to maintaining essential municipal and educational services to the greatest extent possible, while operating within the strict limits imposed by Proposition 2½ and acknowledging the financial realities facing the Town.

3

PROCESS

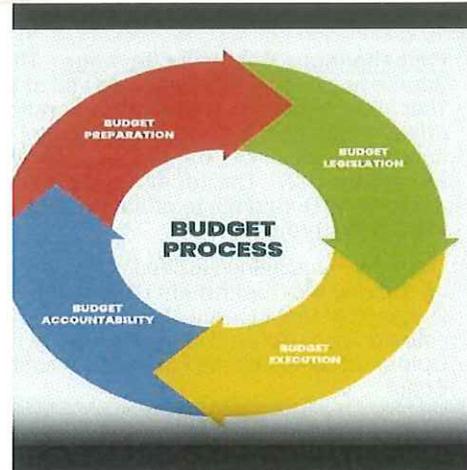


- The Town Manager shall provide a **Balanced Budget with no consideration of an Override for Fiscal Year 2027. Any Municipal Spending Increase shall be kept to no more than forty (40%) percent of anticipated new revenues for Fiscal Year 2027. The remaining new revenues shall be set aside for the Fiscal Year 2027 Proposed Operating Assessment of the Groton Dunstable Regional School District.**
- The Town Manager shall provide a **complete listing/summary of any reductions to the Budget to comply with this Guidance.**

4

PROCESS

- Budgetary Instructions were released on November 13, 2025
- Departments were asked to provide a budget that maintains services at current levels.
- Budgets were due on December 1, 2025 and review meetings with the Finance Team took place between December 8 and December 10, 2025.
- Town Manager was assisted by the Finance Team made up of Patricia DuFresne, Katie Kazanjian, Megan Foster, Melisa Doig and Kara Cruikshank



5

BUDGET DEVELOPMENT

- Anticipated New Revenues for Fiscal Year 2027:
 - Based on a final FY 2026 Levy Limit of \$39,607,199, the tax levy will increase by \$990,180 in FY 2027.
 - New Growth Estimate of \$21.5 million, or \$317,770 in additional tax revenue, for a total increase in the Tax Levy of \$1,307,950.
 - Local Receipts are estimated to increase by \$255,875*.
 - Small Increase in Other Available Funds of \$10,199.

*See Next Slide for Rule Exception



6

BUDGET DEVELOPMENT

Miscellaneous Recurring Revenue – This Revenue Source has been increased by a total of \$136,988 in Fiscal Year 2027. However, only \$2,000 (to reflect the actual offset for the Senior Center Van Service) is an actual increase that can be counted towards new revenues in Fiscal Year 2027. The additional \$134,988 is coming from the Town of Dunstable to offset the Excluded Debt for the PFAS water project.

This amount is being carried in this Revenue Source based on the way the Department of Revenue wants the Town to account for that income. It will be removed from the calculation to determine new revenues to comply with the Guidance issued by the Finance Committee and Select Board

In addition, the Water Department will contribute \$34,909, for a total of \$169,897 to offset PFAS Debt.



7

REVENUE PROJECTIONS

TO CALCULATE THE FY 2027 LEVY LIMIT

FY 2026 LEVY LIMIT \$39,607,199

ADD 2½ PERCENT \$ 990,180

ADD NEW GROWTH \$ 317,770

EXPECTED FY 2027 LEVY LIMIT \$40,915,149

8

REVENUE PROJECTIONS



FY 2027 TOTAL TAX LEVY CALCULATION

- FY 2027 LEVY LIMIT \$40,915,149
- DEBT EXCLUSION – TOWN \$ 6,228,943
- FY 2027 PFAS PAYMENT \$ (169,897)
- FY 2027 DEBT ADJUSTMENT \$ (945)
- DEBT EXCLUSION – GDRSD \$ 108,143

- **TOTAL TAX LEVY** **\$47,081,393**

9



REVENUE PROJECTIONS

OTHER ESTIMATED REVENUES

- State Aid \$1,206,376
- M.V. Excise Taxes \$1,985,902
- General Revenues \$3,899,300
- Free Cash \$ 501,164
- Other Available Funds \$ 360,199

- **TOTAL** **\$7,952,941**

10

BUDGET DEVELOPMENT

• Overall, the Finance Team anticipates an increase of 3.42% in New Revenues for Fiscal Year 2027 as follows:

Revenue Source	Budgeted FY 2026	Proposed FY 2027	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Property Tax*	\$ 39,607,199	\$ 40,915,149	\$ 1,307,950	3.30%
State Aid	\$ 1,182,722	\$ 1,206,376	\$ 23,654	2.00%
Local Receipts - Excluding Country Club**	\$ 4,754,327	\$ 4,985,202	\$ 230,875	4.86%
Country Club Revenue	\$ 875,000	\$ 900,000	\$ 25,000	2.86%
Other Available Funds	\$ 350,000	\$ 360,199	\$ 10,199	2.91%
TOTAL	\$ 46,769,248	\$ 48,366,926	\$ 1,597,678	3.42%

*Includes 2½ percent increase allowed by law and estimated \$21.5 million in new growth.
 **Does not include Revenue received from the Town of Dunstable (\$134,988) for the PFAS Project Debt Service.

11

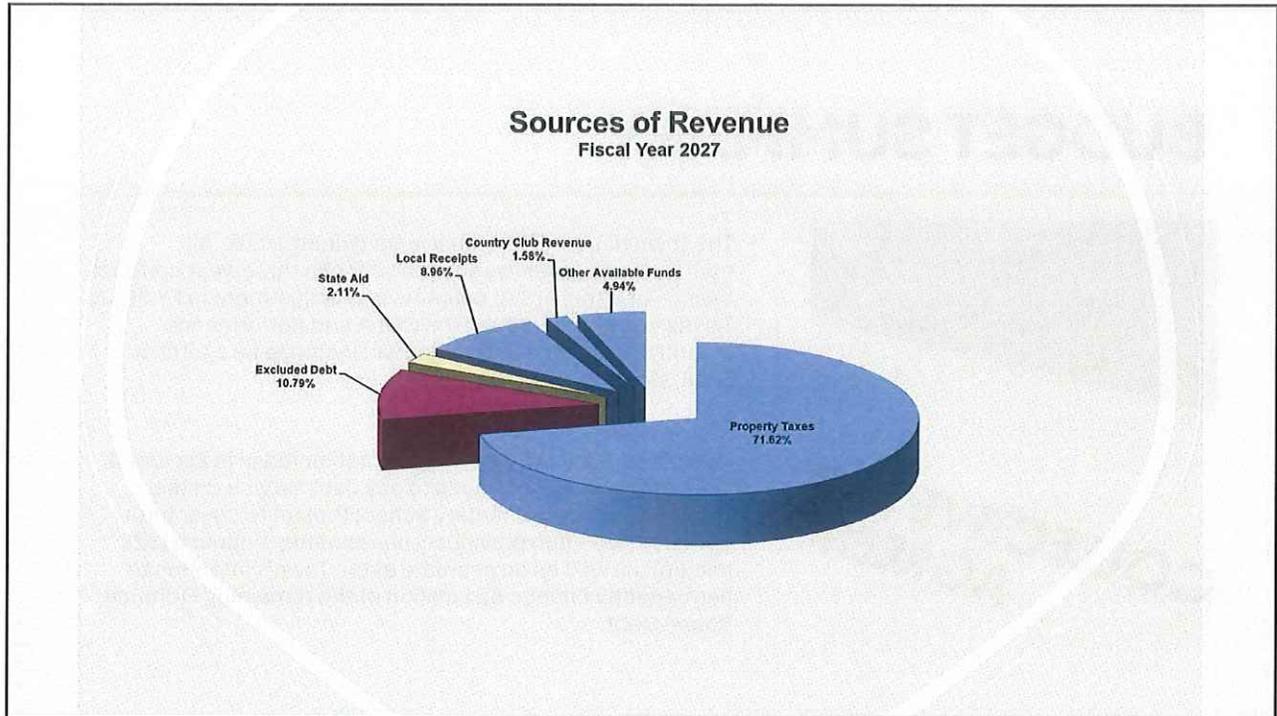
BUDGET DEVELOPMENT

IMPLEMENTATION OF GUIDANCE

TOTAL NEW REVENUES: **\$1,597,678**

- **40% - Municipal Operations:** **\$639,071**
- **60% - GDRSD Assessment:** **\$958,607**

12



13

BUDGET SUMMARY

MANDATORY EXPENDITURES:

- Middlesex County has informed the Town that our Pension Assessment in Fiscal Year 2027 will increase by 6.39%, or by \$168,716 from \$2,640,116 to \$2,808,832.
- The unstable health insurance market that caused a major increase in Fiscal Year 2026, will continue in Fiscal Year 2027. Based on this, MIIA is recommending that an increase of fourteen (14%) percent in rates for FY 2027 be carried at this time. This will require a net increase of 5.46%, or \$99,293, from \$1,817,707 to \$1,917,000. This will be updated when the Town receives the final rates from MIIA in early February.



Definition

Mandatory Spending

14

BUDGET SUMMARY



COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT

- The Town has six (6) Collective Bargaining Units. All contracts will enter the second year of a three-year contract calling for a three (3%) percent wage adjustment in FY 2027. Taking into consideration the COLA and performance incentives, salaries and wages will increase by a total of \$224,951 in FY 2027.
- Fiscal Year 2027 will see a significant increase in Excluded Debt as the Town continues to pay debt service on the Florence Roche Elementary School Project to cover both debt that has been previously permanently financed (\$28 million), as well as an estimate of the Town's intention to permanently finance \$24 million of the remaining Florence Roche Debt.

15

BUDGET SUMMARY



- Fiscal Year 2027 will be the first year that the Town will be paying Debt Service on the PFAS Waterline Project, which is broken down into two issues.
- The first issue is the SRF Debt for the original Project in the amount of \$11,586,118 (after loan forgiveness) and \$4,584,086 for the next Phase of the project. This Debt Service will be offset by payments from the Town of Dunstable and the Groton Water Department in the amount of \$169,897.
- Excluded Debt will increase in Fiscal Year 2027 by \$744,651, or 20.55%, from \$5,115,092 to \$6,116,244.
- Debt within the Levy will stay stable at \$253,894

16

PROPOSED MUNICIPAL BUDGET

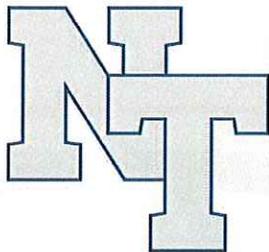
Proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Municipal Budget



General Government	\$	2,701,294
Land Use Departments	\$	596,422
Protection of Persons and Property	\$	4,982,788
Department of Public Works	\$	2,240,000
Library and Citizen Services	\$	2,489,751
Employee Benefits	\$	5,119,652
TOTAL	\$	18,129,907

17

REGIONAL SCHOOLS



- The Groton Dunstable Regional School District faces significant challenges in Fiscal Year 2027. Two straight years of failed overrides in Groton to fund the School District Operational Assessment has taken its toll on the District's ability to continue to provide a quality education for Groton's children.
- The District's initial budget submission, which incorporated all departmental requests, proposed an increase of just over \$4 million, or approximately 8 percent, over the FY 2026 Operating Budget. Since that time, the School Committee and District Administration have taken steps to reduce the preliminary operating budget from \$54,672,144 on November 6, 2025, to \$54,045,663 as of January 6, 2026. Despite these efforts, the current proposal remains 6.46 percent higher than FY 2026 and exceeds the revenue capacity of both Groton and Dunstable.

18

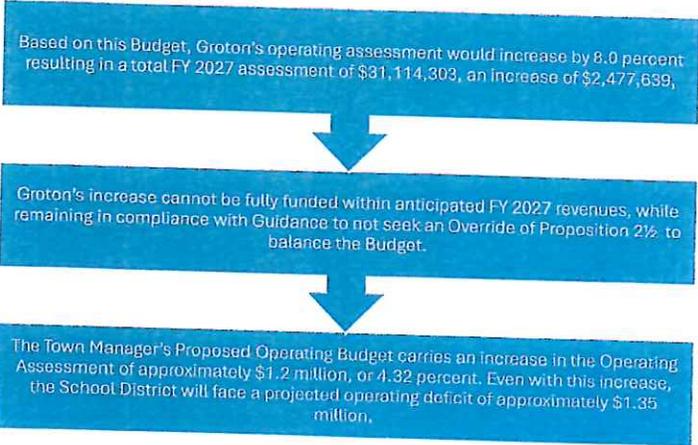
REGIONAL SCHOOLS

GDRSD Cost Drivers:

- Wage increases of 5.42%
- Benefit costs increasing by 7.92%
- Middlesex County Retirement Assessment Increase of 9.15%
- Projected Health Insurance Increases of 8.9%
- Mandated Instructional Programs
- Increased Student Service Needs
- Rising transportation costs
- Deferred Maintenance
- Substantial Increase in Out-of-District Placement Costs



REGIONAL SCHOOLS



REGIONAL SCHOOLS



Nashoba Valley Regional Technical School District:

- Preliminary information received from the Nashoba Valley Technical Regional School District is that Groton's student population has remained the same in Fiscal Year 2026 (which sets the Budget for Fiscal Year 2027). Based on this, the Proposed Budget is anticipating that the assessment in Fiscal Year 2027 will increase by two and one-half (2½%) percent, or \$22,712 from \$908,490 to \$931,202. This will be updated when the District releases its Budget later this week.

21

MEETING BUDGET GUIDANCE



Category	FY 2027
Anticipated Increase in Other FY 2027 Funds	\$ 10,199
Anticipated FY 2027 Levy Increase (\$21.5 Million in New Growth)	\$ 1,307,950
Anticipated FY 2027 Local Receipts Increase (3.5% Estimated Increase)	\$ 255,875
Anticipated FY 2027 State Aid Increase (2% Estimated Increase)	\$ 23,654
Available New Revenue for Fiscal Year 2026	\$ 1,597,678
Initial Set Aside for Municipal Budget (40%)	\$ 639,071
Initial Set Aside for GDRSD Operational Assessment (60%)	\$ 958,607
Proposed Budget Increase (22.2%)	\$ 353,782
Proposed GDRSD Operational Assessment Increase (76.4%)	\$ 1,221,184
Set Aside for Nashoba Tech (1.4%)	\$ 22,712
Proposed Budget Increase	\$ 1,597,678

22

MEETING BUDGET GUIDANCE



Impact of Meeting the Guidance:

Municipal Government Reductions Totaling \$234,374:

- Various reductions in multiple expense line items - \$41,539.
- Police – Make permanent a patrol officer vacancy - \$73,960.
- Library - Eliminate funding for Sunday hours and the Summer Reading Program - \$30,842.
- DPW – Make permanent an equipment operator/laborer vacancy - \$60,218.
- DPW – Shift cost for 16 hours a week of Administrative Assistant to Stormwater Enterprise Fund - \$27,815.

23

MEETING BUDGET GUIDANCE



Groton Dunstable Regional School District:

Over the last three Fiscal Years, the School District has reduced Staffing by 35.5 FTEs, or roughly \$2.7 million in budget reductions.

In FY 2027, the District has made the following reductions:

- Eliminated two (2) FTE student service positions that were unfilled vacancies, with reductions carrying forward into FY 2027.
- Reduced paraprofessional staffing where possible, with adjustments made throughout the year based on student needs.
- Reduced the regular education transportation fleet from 18 buses to 17, resulting in approximately \$86,000 in annual savings, continuing into FY 2027.
- Negotiated increased employee contributions to health insurance premiums, shifting an additional 3% in FY 2026 and 2% in FY 2027 to employees.
- Initiated a consultant-led review of school scheduling to improve the efficiency of student service delivery, consistent with recommendations from the operational audit.
- Filled a maintenance vacancy with a licensed electrician, reducing reliance on outside contracted services, with plans to pursue similar efficiencies through future hires.
- Will continue to evaluate staffing through attrition; when retirements occur, positions will be reviewed for potential restructuring or replacement.
- A reduction of 7 to 10 FTEs in FY 2027 (exact positions to be determined).

24

MAJOR INITIATIVES

- A Major Initiative is defined as any proposed increase in the Operating Budget of \$50,000 in any fiscal year and/or an increase of \$100,000 over three years.
- This year, I am presenting to the Select Board and Finance Committee with three major initiatives for consideration in future Fiscal Years. All of these Major Initiatives affect our Public Safety Departments and are important for the safety and welfare of our residents. Please consider the following:
 - Additional Sergeant in the Police Department.
 - Additional Six Firefighter/EMTs in the Fire Department
 - Restore Two Positions in the Highway Department



25

MAJOR INITIATIVES

Department	Initiative	Positions	Cost Per Position	Total Annual Cost	Tax Rate Impact (FY 2027)	Average Tax Bill (FY 2027)
Police Department	Add One Sergeant Position to provide supervisory coverage on all shifts	1	\$ 193,103	\$ 193,103	\$ 0.06	\$ 45.68
Fire Department	Add Firefighter/EMTs to achieve four Firefighter/EMTs per shift	6	\$ 155,855	\$ 935,130	\$ 0.31	\$ 236.03
Department of Public Works (Highway Department)	Restore two eliminated positions to return Department to full staffing	2	\$ 92,340	\$ 184,680	\$ 0.06	\$ 45.68
Total	-	9	-	\$ 1,312,913	\$ 0.43	\$ 327.39



26

CAPITAL BUDGET

Department	Item	Amount	Funding Source
Planning Board	Complete Streets Program	\$ 30,000	Free Cash
Highway	Dump Truck	\$ 40,000	Free Cash
GDRSD	Annual Regional School District Capital	\$ 250,000	Free Cash
Fire and EMS	Portable Radio Replacement	\$ 250,000	GDRSD Capital Stabilization Fund
Highway	Pick-Up Trucks	\$ 195,000	Capital Stabilization Fund
Highway	Brush Mower/Field Mower	\$ 75,000	Capital Stabilization Fund
Highway	Truck Painting	\$ 30,000	Capital Stabilization Fund
Town Facilities	IT/Infrastructure	\$ 25,000	Capital Stabilization Fund
Town Facilities	Municipal Building Minor Capital	\$ 40,000	Capital Stabilization Fund
Park Department	Property Improvements	\$ 120,000	Capital Stabilization Fund
Police Department	Police Cruisers	\$ 25,000	Capital Stabilization Fund
Police Department	Police Cruisers	\$ 147,010	Capital Stabilization Fund
Police Department	Police Minor Capital	\$ 34,750	Capital Stabilization Fund
Country Club	Electronic Control Device - Taser	\$ 10,500	Capital Stabilization Fund
Country Club	Golf Carts	\$ 27,000	Capital Stabilization Fund
Country Club	Greens Equipment - Ventrac	\$ 10,918	Capital Stabilization Fund
Country Club	Greens Equipment - Truckster XD	\$ 14,736	Capital Stabilization Fund
Country Club	Greens Equipment - Greens Mower	\$ 12,067	Capital Stabilization Fund
Country Club	Greens Equipment - Fairway Mower	\$ 20,000	Capital Stabilization Fund
Country Club	Greens Equipment - Rough Mower	\$ 20,000	Capital Stabilization Fund
Country Club	Irrigation and Course Improvements	\$ 100,000	Capital Stabilization Fund
Country Club	Roof for Pavilion	\$ 14,200	Capital Stabilization Fund
Fire and EMS	Ambulance 2 Replacement	\$ 95,000	Ambulance Fund
Fire and EMS	PFAS Free Structural FF Gear	\$ 50,000	Ambulance Fund
Fire and EMS	Ambulance 1 Replacement	\$ 100,614	Ambulance Fund
Total Requested		\$ 1,736,795	
Funding Sources			
	Free Cash	\$ 320,000	
	GDRSD Capital Stabilization Fund	\$ 250,000	
	Capital Stabilization Fund	\$ 921,181	
	Ambulance Fund	\$ 245,614	
Total		\$ 1,736,795	

27

ENTERPRISE FUNDS

Category	FY 2026	FY 2027	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Water Department	\$ 2,048,795	\$ 2,034,851	\$ (13,944)	-0.68%
Sewer Department	\$ 976,475	\$ 1,035,771	\$ 59,295	6.07%
Four Corners Sewer District	\$ 310,663	\$ 103,539	\$ (207,123)	-66.67%
Stormwater Utility	\$ 249,890	\$ 282,565	\$ 32,675	13.08%
Total Enterprise Funds	\$ 3,585,823	\$ 3,456,726	\$ (129,097)	-3.60%

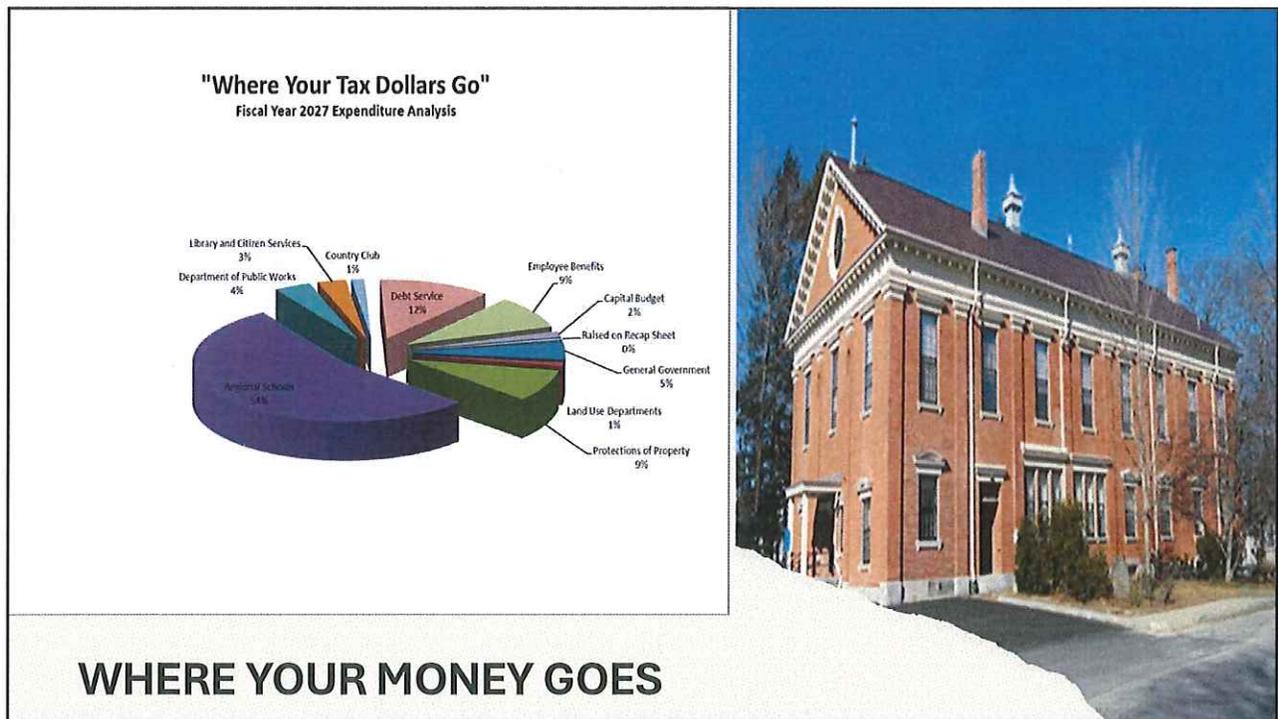
28

BALANCED BUDGET



Category	FY 2026	FY 2027	Dollar Difference	Percentage Change
General Government	\$ 2,697,953	\$ 2,701,294	\$ 3,341	0.12%
Land Use	\$ 571,311	\$ 596,422	\$ 25,111	4.40%
Protection of Persons and Property	\$ 4,843,747	\$ 4,982,788	\$ 139,041	2.87%
Department of Public Works	\$ 2,400,571	\$ 2,240,000	\$ (160,571)	-6.69%
Library and Citizen Services	\$ 2,428,900	\$ 2,489,751	\$ 60,851	2.51%
Employee Benefits	\$ 4,833,643	\$ 5,119,652	\$ 286,009	5.92%
Sub-Total	\$ 17,776,125	\$ 18,129,907	\$ 353,782	1.99%
Debt Service - Excluded	\$ 5,004,703	\$ 6,058,101	\$ 1,053,398	21.05%
Debt Service - In Levy Only	\$ 403,325	\$ 553,623	\$ 150,298	37.26%
Sub-Total - All Municipal	\$ 23,184,153	\$ 24,741,631	\$ 1,557,478	6.72%
Nashoba Tech	\$ 908,490	\$ 931,202	\$ 22,712	2.50%
Groton-Dunstable Operating	\$ 28,247,632	\$ 29,468,816	\$ 1,221,184	4.32%
Groton-Dunstable Excluded Debt	\$ 110,389	\$ 108,143	\$ (2,246)	-2.03%
Groton-Dunstable In-Levy Debt	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0.00%
Groton Dunstable Capital	\$ 278,643	\$ 500,000	\$ 221,357	79.44%
Sub-Total - Education	\$ 29,545,154	\$ 31,008,161	\$ 1,463,007	4.95%
Grand Total - Town Budget	\$ 52,729,307	\$ 55,749,792	\$ 3,020,485	5.73%

29



30

TAX RATE IMPACT



		Actual FY 2026	Proposed FY 2027	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Levy Capacity Used	\$	39,557,852	\$ 40,915,149	\$ 1,357,297	3.43%
Tax Rate on Levy Capacity Used	\$	13.09	\$ 13.44	\$ 0.35	2.67%
Average Tax Bill	\$	9,967	\$ 10,233	\$ 266	2.67%
Excluded Debt	\$	5,115,092	\$ 6,166,244	\$ 1,051,152	20.55%
Tax Rate on Excluded Debt	\$	1.69	\$ 2.02	\$ 0.33	19.53%
Average Tax Bill	\$	1,287	\$ 1,538	\$ 251	19.53%
Final Levy Used	\$	44,672,944	\$ 47,081,393	\$ 2,408,449	5.39%
Final Tax Rate	\$	14.78	\$ 15.46	\$ 0.68	4.60%
Average Tax Bill	\$	11,253	\$ 11,771	\$ 518	4.60%

31



FISCAL YEAR 2027 PROPOSED BUDGET

32