

SELECT BOARD/FINCOM MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, JULY 13, 2026
SELECT BOARD APPROVED/ FINCOM APPROVED

Select Board Members Present: Peter Cunningham, Chair; Becky Pine, Vice Chair; Nick Degaitas Jr., Clerk; John Reilly; Matt Pisani;

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

School Committee Members Present: An Hee Foley; Rosanna Casavecchia and Justin Owens;

Also Present: Mark Haddad, Town Manager; Kara Cruikshank, Executive Assistant to the Town Manager; Patrica DuFresne, Assistant Director of Finance/Town Accountant; Fire Chief Arthur Cheeks; Cassidy Dallas and Rebecca Weksner (virtually present), Groton Dunstable Regional School Committee Candidates; Jason Kauppi, Town Moderator/FinCom Appointment Committee Chair

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Pine said the Destination Groton Committee is sponsoring a Speaking Event: "Groton's Legacy at Bunker Hill and Beyond". The event will begin at 12:00 PM on Sunday, July 19, 2026, at Lawrence Academy's Richardson-Mees Performing Arts Center.

Mr. Pisani gave kudos to the Commemorations and Celebrations Committee for the wonderful Annual Fireworks event and also recognized Mr. Donald Black's efforts in cleaning up the fields the following day.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Mr. Cunningham said moving forward he would like to offer residents at home the opportunity to comment via Zoom during the public commenting period. Ms. Pine wanted to clarify that the Board members can not respond during the public commenting period.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Update from The Fire Department Staffing Working Group.

Fire Chief Arthur Cheeks attended the meeting alongside the Town Manager to provide an update on the Fire Staffing Working Group. Mr. Haddad explained that several meetings have taken place and that Consultant Jack Parrow has been hired to collect data on the Fire Department's operations. Mr. Parrow's role is to compile and analyze this information and prepare a final Report for presentation to the Select Board and Finance Committee. Consultant Guilfoil Associates has also been hired to share the information with the public. Chief Cheeks noted that Mr. Parrow has completed a few months of data collection and reiterated that the purpose of the study is to improve the effectiveness of the Fire Department. Mutual Aid volumes for both fire and EMS have been analyzed. Chief Cheeks said they will continue to collect data through August, using a total of thirty-five data points. He said they are seeing approximately a 9% increase in Fire and EMS calls compared with this time last year, and the numbers continue to grow. Mr. Haddad would like to hold a public hearing once the Report is complete. He said that, at the end of the day, the public will have a lot of data to review (see the included information provided by Chief Cheeks).

6:15 p.m.- In Joint Session with the Groton Contingent of the Groton Dunstable Regional School District Committee-Interview and Consider Appointing an Individual to the Groton Dunstable Regional School District Committee Until the 2027 Annual Election.

Members of the Groton Contingent of the Groton Dunstable Regional School Committee, An Hee Foley, Rosanna Casavecchia, and Justin Owens, attended the joint session with the Select Board to interview candidates for a vacancy on the GDRSD Committee. The position will be filled until the Annual Town Election in 2027. Mr. Haddad explained that, in accordance with the Board's policy, the position was advertised and that two applications were received: Rebecca Weksner and Cassidy Dallas. Rebecca Weksner attended virtually, while Cassidy Dallas attended in person.

The Select Board asked candidates Cassidy Dallas and Rebecca Weksner to speak about their background. Both candidates provided information about themselves and explained their interest in joining the School Committee, as well as their involvement with the school. They gave an overview of their professional backgrounds and skill sets. The Select Board and School Committee Members questioned the candidates about their knowledge of budgeting and what they could contribute to strengthen the committee. Ms. Pine expressed her appreciation for both candidates and hoped that the candidate not elected this evening would remain involved. Mr. Cunningham thought both candidates were well-informed about what was going on and echoed Ms. Pine's comments. After a thoughtful interview with both well-qualified candidates, Mr. Cunningham entertained a nomination:

Mr. Cunningham nominated Rebecca Weksner to fill the vacancy on the School Committee until the 2027 Annual Election. Mr. Degaitas seconded the motion.

The Groton Dunstable Regional School Committee

Roll Call: Foley-aye; Casavecchia-aye; Owens-aye

The Groton Select Board

Roll Call: Pisani-aye; Reilly-aye; Cunningham-aye; Degaitas- aye; Pine-aye

Rebecca Weksner was unanimously appointed to the Groton-Dunstable Regional School Committee until the 2027 Annual Town Election. The Select Board thanked Cassidy Dallas for their time.

2. Update from the Town Manager on Town Manager/Town Administrator Budget Working Group.

The Town Manager/Town Administrator's Budget Working Group held its first meeting last week. Mr. Haddad explained who the Working Group representatives are. He thought it was a good kickoff meeting, with time spent reviewing projections for FY 2028. Mr. Haddad provided the Board with Groton's FY 2028 Preliminary Summary (summary attached). He believes that FY 2028 will be a very difficult year financially for the towns of Groton and Dunstable and the Groton Dunstable Regional School District Committee. He explained that they started the process early to conduct a lot of research. He said they have a lot of work to do and will include updates to the agenda. They

are not looking at major budget increases, except for funding the Patriot RECC (communications budget). He also emphasized that State aid isn't keeping up with the cost of inflation.

7:00 p.m. In Joint Session with the Finance Committee Review and Consider Approving Line-Item Transfers for Fiscal Year 2026

Mr. Haddad wanted to ensure that there was a quorum for the Finance Committee meeting that evening regarding the line-item transfers. He reached out to Town Counsel and the Town Clerk since the vacancy left by Mary Linskey had not yet been filled. Ms. Linskey's term continues until the vacancy is filled. To ensure a quorum, Patricia DuFresne contacted Mary Linskey to ask her to attend the meeting. Mr. Haddad then thanked Ms. Linskey for her years of service to the Finance Committee.

Mr. Robertson called the Finance Committee to order.

Finance Committee Members Bud Robertson, Chair; David Manugian; Scott Whitefield; Mary Linskey; and Kristina Lengyel were present. Ms. Patricia DuFresne, the Town Accountant/Assistant Finance Director, was also present. At the end of the fiscal year, the Select Board and Finance Committee conduct Line-Item Transfers to address shortfalls in the municipal budget. This is a redistribution of funding within the budget. Mr. Haddad provided the Board with the proposed line-item transfers for year-end 2026. Ms. DuFresne walked the Board through the line-item transfers as shown in the memo provided to the Board. She explained that an additional projected deficit of \$57,184 has been added to support accounts (see the attached Proposed Line-Item Transfers for Year-End 2026).

Ms. DuFresne reported that the total final transfer in the operating budget for year-end 2026 is \$309,808. She hopes to transfer most of the funds from health insurance and the remainder from other line items within the same function of government. Ms. DuFresne said that the health insurance opt-out has been very helpful. Mr. Robertson explained that this is a typical year for expenses. Ms. Pine emphasized that the departments are still living within their budgets.

Finance Committee

On behalf of the Finance Committee, Mr. Manugian moved to approve the Line-item transfers for the FY26 budget as presented that evening. Mr. Robertson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Select Board

On behalf of the Select Board, Ms. Pine made a motion to approve the line-item transfers as presented. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The Select Board recessed at 7:15 PM for a Finance Committee appointment meeting. The Select Board reconvened at 8:06 PM.

Interviews of Finance Committee Candidates: The FinCom Appointment Committee (Jason Kauppi, Bud Robertson, Peter Cunningham) called itself to order. Mr. Kauppi asked the candidates to introduce themselves and explain their interest in serving on the FinCom.

Ms. Nancy Muller explained that she was a resident of Groton for the last 4.5 years and had experience as a Financial Analyst, as well as marketing and health care with extensive supervisory skills. Ms. Lengyel asked whether she had served on other committees in Groton. Ms. Muller replied that she had served on the Local Cultural Council as well as the Groton Garden Club, and had participated in pastoral care and outreach with her church. Mr. Robertson asked what she felt would be her most important contribution to FinCom. She said that she is resourceful and creative. Also, her educational background as well as her financial planning experience would be useful to the FinCom. In response to a question from Mr. Manugian, Ms. Muller explained that while she does not have direct experience working with labor unions, she believes a good manager must look after their employees (whether they are unionized or not) and she is confident in her ability to manager employees. She went on to say she is eager to learn about the impact of labor unions on the Town. Mr. Whitefield asked what she felt might be the most significant opportunity to improve the financial situation of the Town. Ms. Muller noted the lack of any significant commercial tax base resulting in a larger burden for residents. She would like to build support for drawing young families into Groton to enjoy our amenities, thereby generating more excitement about living and growing up in Groton. Mr. Cunningham asked how her private sector background would transfer to public sector participation. Ms. Muller replied that due to this background, she brings not only a wealth of creativity to the table, but a diversity of opinions and processes.

Mr. Tom Delaney explained that he had worked for the Town of Groton for 40 years and continues to stay involved through driving the Senior Van, working as an animal control officer and consulting regarding Chapter 90 and the Squannacook Dam project. He described his extensive experience with supervising employees, creating and managing budgets. He feels his deep understanding of the Town's annual budget process will be of help to the FinCom. He is known as a "can do" manager and will bring that attitude to his work on the committee. Mr. Robertson asked what specifically he would bring to the ongoing budget balancing dilemma between the school district and the municipal government. Mr. Delaney replied that he has the advantage of having been involved in municipal government for a long time and has observed these trends playing out over many years. In response to a question from Ms. Lengyel, Mr. Delaney explained that his background is largely in the construction industry where he has worked his way up from entry level positions. He feels his greatest skills are common sense and working with people. Ms. Linskey noted that he remains friendly with many of the employees in Town, and asked if he would be able to make decisions objectively. Mr. Delaney said it is important to do what is right, and he has always been able to remain objective while making decisions. Mr. Whitefield asked where he felt would be the biggest opportunity to improve the Town's finances. Mr. Delaney replied that there is no "smoking gun;" the Town has to find new revenue streams, develop commercial properties, collaborate closely with the school district on budget issues, and not dismiss the idea of future tax overrides. Mr. Cunningham asked about his priorities regarding Town finances. Mr. Delaney said it was important to involve the Department Heads as they have unique insights into the operating budgets.

Mr. Jack Petropoulos introduced himself to the group as a long-time resident of Groton with an MBA from Northeastern University, and experience as a Product Manager. He served on the Select Board for six years and understands the importance of having taxpayer representation on Town boards and committees. Mr. Petropoulos distributed a salary growth analysis showing Town employee salary data compared to that of Groton residents. He explained that this is the kind of analysis he has previously done for the Town and that he will continue to work to provide as a committee member. He noted that he was instrumental in designing the Quarterly Budget Report that is presented to the Select Board by the Town Accountant, and is comfortable offering budget guidance to the Town Manager. He spoke briefly of his involvement with the Lost Lake Sewer project as well as with adding the Major Initiative section to the budget. He believes that the Finance Committee needs someone comfortable with challenging popular assumptions. He would prioritize expanding the Major Initiatives report, and publishing more adequate spending reports. In response to a question posed by Mr. Robertson, he said as an appointed member he could easily work with other members in a cooperative effort to advance the Town's interests. Mr. Whitefield asked what he would bring to the task of improving the Town's financial picture. Mr. Petropoulos said he would analyze major expenditures (again making sure they were in the Town's best interest). He would work to increase taxpayer confidence in financial leadership and make sure budgets are fair and reasonable.

Mr. Kauppi thanked the candidates for coming forward and asked for input from the Finance Committee members. The members presented their thoughts on each of the candidates emphasizing Ms. Muller's educational background, creative strengths and fresh perspective. Mr. Robertson noted the importance of taking time to come up to speed on municipal finance issues when new to local government. He moved to nominate Ms. Muller to the vacant seat. Mr. Cunningham seconded this motion noting Ms. Muller's helpful private sector perspectives. Mr. Kauppi agreed that Ms. Muller's fresh perspective as well as her background and education will help make her an effective member of the Finance Committee. Mr. Kauppi called for a vote, which was unanimous in favor of appointing Ms. Muller to a three-year term (through 6/30/29) on the Finance Committee. The Vote: 3-0-0

The FinCom Appointment Committee adjourned at 8:05 pm.

Mr. Haddad informed the group that the public hearing on the Fall Town Meeting Warrant would be held on 8/31/26. The warrant opened on 7/13/26 and closes 8/13/26.

The Finance Committee adjourned at 8:06 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Kara Cruikshank, Executive Assistant to the Town Manager and Patricia Dufresne, Assistant Finance Director/Town Accountant

PROPOSED LINE ITEM TRANSFERS FOR YEAR END 2026

Ledger Number	Transfers TO (Line Items Projecting a Deficit)		Adj. & New	Final Transfer Totals	Notes	Function Total
	Account	Requests as of 6/11/2026				
5400	124 Town Mgr Expenses	5,600	6,338	11,938	Survey for Easement/Litix/Wreaths	
5115	141 Assessors Salaries	11,822		11,822	VBB	
5120	135 Accounting Wages	3,856		3,856	Mid Year wage to sal adj	
5400	145 Treasurer/Collector Expenses	3,000		3,000	QDS Data Extraction	
5220	151 Town Counsel	25,000	(24,200)	800	June Mirick Invoice	
5303	156 Postage Expense	\$685	\$700	700	Mailing Activity	
5120	161 Town Clerk Wages	\$885	(\$685)	\$0	Election OT	
5400	171 Conservation Commission	\$300		\$300	Groton Herald Invoices	46,490 Gen Govt
5115	210 Police Salaries	\$2,191	(\$481)	\$1,710	VBB/Longevity	
5120	241 Building Insp Wages	\$5,200		\$5,200	Xtra Local Inspector hours	
5115	242 Mechanical Inspector Salaries	\$1,220	\$6,685	\$7,905	Inspectional Activity	
5400	242 Mechanical Inspector Expenses	\$625	\$266	\$891	mileage	
5400	244 Sealer of Weights & Measures	\$78		\$78	State Contract	
5400	291 Civil Defense	\$4,000		\$4,000	Hazard Mitigation Plan	
5115	292 Dog Officer	\$429		\$429	Renegotiation of salary	\$6,139 PPP
5115	420 Highway Salaries	\$11,000		\$11,000	HI Opt Out not budgeted	
5490	423 Snow & Ice	\$1,921		\$1,921	Winter Storm Activity	
5471	430 Tipping Fees	\$10,000		\$16,500	Disposal Activity	\$29,421 DPW
5120	542 COA Van Wages	\$8,360	\$6,500	\$7,000	Van Activity Increases	\$7,000 Citizen Svc
5120	610 Library Wages	\$6,569	(\$1,360)	\$6,395	HI Opt out/VBB Retirements	
5120	640 Country Club Wages	\$30,000	\$4,500	\$34,500	Programming	
5400	640 Country Club Expenses	\$57,000	\$43,000	\$100,000	CC Function Hall Bathrooms	
5400	913 Unemployment Compensation	\$5,000	\$10,752	\$15,752	Unemployment Claims	
5173	916 Town Share Medicare	\$10,000		\$10,000	Payroll Activity	\$25,752 Benefits
5002-4990	5002 Old Ayr Rd Betterments		\$5,000	\$5,000	Final Debt Payment	
6000-5120	6000 Center Sewer Enterprise	\$3,841	\$159	\$4,000	Sewer Ent Vote	
6040-5120	6040 4 Corners Sewer	\$427	\$73	\$500	4 Corners Ent Vote	
6100-5120	6100 Water Enterprise Wages	\$39,000	\$111	\$39,111	Mid Year wage adj	
6500-5120	6500 Stormwater	\$5,500		\$5,500	Stormwater Ent Stipend	\$54,111 Enterprise
TOTAL PROJECTED DEFICITS (ESTIMATED)		\$252,624	\$57,184	\$309,808		309,808

Transfers FROM (Line Items with Projected Surplus)		TOTAL SURPLUS FUNDS (ESTIMATED)		Net Transfer	
Account	Requests as of 6/11/2026	Adj. & New	Final Transfer Totals	Notes	Function Total
5120	141 Assessor Wages	-\$6,778	-\$6,778		Gen Govt
5115	145 Treasury Salaries	-\$15,000	-\$15,000		
5115	161 Town Clerk Salaries	-\$8,000	-\$8,000		
5451	189 Insurance Deductible Reserve	-\$10,000	-\$11,315		
5120	210 Police Wages	-\$2,191	\$481		
5115	241 Bldg Inspector Salaries	-\$2,600	-\$17,500		
5120	420 Highway Wages	-\$23,000	-\$14,609		
5400	430 Solid Waste General Expenses	-\$3,200	-\$3,200		
5120	541 COA Wages	-\$6,435	-\$6,435		
5115	610 Library Salaries	\$0	\$0		
5925	752 Interest on Short Term Debt	-\$8,898	-\$8,898		
5400	914 Employee Health Insurance	-\$5,159	-\$5,159		
6000-5400	6000 Center Sewer General Expenses	-\$3,841	-\$73		
6040-5400	6040 4 Corners General Expenses	-\$427	-\$913		
6100-5115	6100 Water Department Salaries	-\$22,000	-\$16,675		
6100-5400	6100 Water Enterprise General Expenses	-\$17,000	-\$15,873		
6100-5925	6100 Water Enterprise Interest on Notes	-\$5,500	-\$5,500		
6500-5400	6500 Stormwater General Expense	-\$5,500	-\$5,500		
TOTAL SURPLUS FUNDS (ESTIMATED)		-\$252,624	-\$57,184		
Net Transfer		\$0	\$0		