



TOWN OF GROTON
Park Commission
Town Hall
1st Floor Meeting Room

PARK COMMISSION
Mary Jennings, Chair
Anna Eliot, Vice-Chair
Mark Presti, Clerk
Rob Foley, CPC Representative
Jeffrey Ohringer, Member

Date: Monday January 12, 2026
Time: 5:00 PM
Location: 1st Floor Meeting Room

Members Present: Rob Foley, Anna Eliot, Mary Jennings, Mark Presti, Jeffrey Ohringer
Others Present: Laura Fisher, Brian Callahan, Mark Haddad, Kara Cruikshank, Megan Buczynski, Peter Cunningham, Judy Anderson, Mike Johnson, Don Barry, Pat McAdams, David Pitkin, Bob Pine, Richard Hewitt, Mary Winkus, Jim Simkd, Michael Castorano, Matthew Waterman, Phil Francisco.

Call to Order: 5:10 p.m.

Mary Jennings chair, called the meeting.

Public Comments – None

Chair Report –

Valerie Denataly, chair of the Groton Garden Club, presented a plan to the Commissioners, for a stone bench and commemorative plaque to mark the town's 250th anniversary. They plan to have it ready by Flag Day on June 14th with an approximated \$2,000 set aside for the project. A follow up with the Historical Commission on

Upon motion by Commissioner Presti, seconded my commissioner Eliot, to accept the gifted commemorative stone bench at the Prescott Common Garden, was unanimously approved.

CPC Application for GD Softball –

The committee reviewed a CPA application for softball field improvements, with Don explaining that the proposal had been pared down to focus on essential needs. The application includes funding requests for outfield fencing, protective barrier netting, parking lot fencing, and an infield groomer, with total costs of \$99,000. The committee raised concerns about improperly installed bases and agreed to follow up on getting a copy of the original purchase order to determine responsibility for correction.

Resident John Strauss voiced concerns with fencing and whether the new plans would cut into the hill at Cutler Field which creates a berm for water containment.

Don Barry mentioned there will not be many more changes to the field and that the fencing will not be continuing along the rest of the sidelines.

Upon motion by Commissioner Foley, seconded my commissioner Eliot, to Co-Sponsor CPA application 2027-08 for Groton-Dunstable Youth Softball for \$99,000.

Upon motion by Commissioner Eliot, seconded by Commissioner Foley, to write a letter of support for the CPA application 2027-08 for Groton-Dunstable Youth Softball.

Approval of Minutes –

Upon motion by Anna Elliot, seconded by Rob Foley, the minutes for October 6, 2025 were unanimously approved.

Upon motion by Rob Foley, seconded by Anna Elliot, the minutes for October 27, 2025 were unanimously approved.

Upon motion by Anna Elliot, seconded by Jeff Ohringer, the minutes for November 10, 2025 were unanimously approved.

Upon motion by Rob Foley, seconded by Anna Elliot, the minutes for November 25, 2025 were unanimously approved as amended.

Budget Review –

Chair Jennings mentioned the need for timely submission of needs reports to facilitate better planning and decision-making. Jennings emphasized the importance of completing individual reports in advance of meetings.

Jennings proposed a 3% inflation increase for the park budget, which was supported by the other Commissioners. A budget meeting with the town manager is scheduled for Wednesday, December 10th to discuss the proposed \$25,750 capital budget and \$66,716 operating budget, with Mary planning to present a level-funded budget while highlighting the need for future capital improvements.

Chair Jennings wanted to remind the Commissioners that the Public Hearing would be our next meeting, scheduled for January 12, 2026.

CPC Rep –

Commissioner Foley reported that the previous CPC meeting consisted of whether to pay off the Middle School track in a year or not so there would not be two major projects being funded simultaneously. They have requested that the Parks Committee let them know what the major priorities are for their next CPC meeting. The Commission agreed that the Cow Pond Project was their main priority for projects.

Financial and Permits –

The Commissioners approved a permit for a Christmas tree bonfire to be held at Cutler field on January 16th. Trash bins at all parks will be removed as of tomorrow for the winter months. The bidding process for irrigation work will start in January, with DPW director Brian Callahan overseeing the process and ensuring both general and irrigation contractors are notified.

Needs Assessment –

Rob Foley read a statement into the minutes. See Attached.

The Parks Commission discussed park improvement priorities and reviewed a needs assessment. They identified Cow Pond project being the top priority, supporting the finishing the renovations at Town Field, Woitowicz possibly expanding parking, and completing the softball field along with getting a sign at Cutler Field as highest priority items (rated 1.0-2.5).

Upon motion by Vice-Chair Elliot, seconded by Commissioner Ohringer, to approve the DPW department to order a sign for Cutler Field and to repair the sinkhole at Woitowicz Field up to an amount of \$500 was unanimously approved.

Schedule Next Meeting and Adjourn- Monday, January 26, 2026 5:00pm

Mark Presti moved to adjourn at 6:55 pm, Rob Foley seconded. The motion carried unanimously

Minutes by Laura Fisher, Administrative Assistant.

APPROVED: 3/23/26
