



TOWN OF GROTON

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

Select Board

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

Town Manager
Mark W. Haddad

**SELECT BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY, APRIL 9, 2024
AGENDA
SELECT BOARD MEETING ROOM
2nd FLOOR
GROTON TOWN HALL**

- 6:00 P.M. **Announcements and Review Agenda for the Public**
- 6:05 P.M. **Public Comment Period #1**
- I. 6:06 P.M. **Town Manager's Report**
1. **Consider Ratifying the Town Manager's Appointment of Michael Luttati, Collin Hakey and John Orpen as Golf Staff for the Groton Country Club**
 2. **FY 2025 Budget Update**
 3. **Update on Select Board Schedule End of Fiscal Year**
- II. 6:10 P.M. **Items for Select Board Consideration and Action**
1. **Appoint Sue Fitterman as a Full-Member of the Sustainability Commission (Ms. Fitterman is currently and Alternate Member)**
 2. **Consider Approving a One-Day All Alcoholic License for the Friends of Prescott for Open Mic Night to be held on Friday, April 12, 2024 from 6:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.**
 3. **Approve 2024 Fuel Storage Licenses**

OTHER BUSINESS

ON-GOING ISSUES – Review and Informational Purposes – Brief Comments - Items May or May Not Be Discussed

- A. **PFAS Issue**
- B. **Green Communities Application and Implementation**
- C. **Florence Roche Elementary School Construction Project**

SELECT BOARD LIAISON REPORTS

- III. **Public Comment Period #2**
- IV. **Minutes: Regularly Scheduled Meeting of March 25, 2024**

ADJOURNMENT

Votes may be taken at any time during the meeting. The listing of topics that the Chair reasonably anticipates will be discussed at the meeting is not intended as a guarantee of the topics that will be discussed. Not all topics listed may in fact be discussed, and other topics not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.



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Town Manager
Mark W. Haddad

To: *Select Board*

From: *Mark W. Haddad – Town Manager*

Subject: *Weekly Agenda Update/Report*

Date: *April 9, 2024*

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Please note that we are meeting on Tuesday night this week. Other than the Town Manager's Report, Items for Select Board Consideration and Action and a review of the On-going Issues List, there is nothing specifically scheduled on Monday's Agenda.

1. I have appointed Michael Luttati, Collin Hakey and John Orpen as Golf Staff at the Groton Country Club. I would respectfully request that the Select Board consider ratifying these appointments at Monday's meeting.
2. I have no specific update on the FY 2025 Budget. We are awaiting action by the Groton Dunstable Regional School District Committee on a new Assessment for FY 2025 before the Finance Committee can finalize a revised budget. I am planning on attending the School Committee's meeting on Wednesday, April 10th.
3. Please see the update to the Select Board's Meeting schedule through the end of the Fiscal Year.

Modnay, April 15, 2024	-No Meeting – Patriot's Day Holiday
Monday, April 22, 2024	-Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Tuesday, April 23, 2024	-2024 Annual Town Election
Monday, April 29, 2024	-Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, May 6, 2024	-Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, May 13, 2024	-Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Saturday, May 18, 2024	-Potential Date for Special Town Meeting
Monday, May 20, 2024	-Regularly Scheduled Meeting (Potential Date for Special Town Meeting)
Monday, May 27, 2024	-No Meeting – Memorial Day Holiday
Monday, June 3, 2024	-Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, June 10, 2024	-Regularly scheduled Meeting
Monday, June 17, 2024	-No Meeting
Monday, June 24, 2024	-Regularly Scheduled Meeting

Select Board
Weekly Agenda Update/Report
April 9, 2024
page two

ITEMS FOR SELECT BOARD CONSIDERATION AND ACTION

1. The Sustainability Commission has requested that the Board appoint Sue Fitterman as a full Member of the Commission. She is currently an Alternate Member. I would respectfully request that the Board make this appointment at Monday's meeting.
2. I would respectfully request that the Board approve a One Day All Alcoholic Beverages License for the Friends of Prescott for their Open Mic Night to be held on Friday, April 12, 2024 from 6:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.
3. Enclosed with this Report are the Fuel Storage Licenses that need to be renewed by the Board. I would respectfully request that you consider approving them at Monday's meeting.

MWH/rjb
enclosures



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Town Manager
Mark W. Haddad

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mark Haddad, Town Manager
FROM: Kara Cruikshank, Executive Assistant
DATE: April 1, 2024
RE: 2024 License Renewals - Fuel Storage

The following licenses require Select Board approval for renewal:

- 1. A.L Prime**
License to expire on April 30, 2024
Located at 619 Boston Road
Fuel Storage license originally granted on July 13, 2009
Contingent Upon Receipt of Renewal
- 2. GDRSD**
License to expire on April 30, 2024
Located at 342 Main Street
Fuel Storage license originally granted on December 15, 2003
- 3. Kayrouz Petroleum, LLC**
License to expire on April 30, 2024
Located at 6 Boston Road
Fuel Storage license originally granted on March 25, 2002
- 4. Energy North (Haffners)**
License to expire on April 30, 2024
Located at 318 Main Street
Fuel Storage license originally granted November 1, 2004
- 5. NESSP (Temple)**
License to expire on April 30, 2024
Located at 1003 Boston Road
Fuel Storage license originally granted on December 12, 2016
- 6. Groton School**
License to expire on April 30, 2024
Located at Farmers Row
Fuel Storage license originally granted on October 4, 2021
- 7. Groton Highway Department**
License to expire on April 30, 2024
Located at 500 Cow Pond Brook Road
Fuel Storage license originally granted on January 1, 2011

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, MARCH 25, 2024
UN-APPROVED**

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

Also Present: Mark Haddad, Town Manager; Kara Cruikshank, Executive Assistant to the Town Manager; Melisa Doig, Human Resource Director; Patricia Dufresne, Assistant Director of Finance/Town Accountant; Megan Foster, Principal Assessor; Bud Robertson, Finance Committee Chair; Jason Kauppi, Town Moderator

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Pine announced an event that will take place on Sunday, April 7th, at 2:00 p.m. at the Old Meeting House. Groton Neighbors, Groton History Center, and the Groton Public Library are sponsoring the event. A performance artist will discuss a woman aviator from Groton in 1837 who posted letters discussing the condition of women. The book "The Invention of Wings" contains the history of this woman and can be found at the Groton Public Library. Ms. Pine stated that it is a well-written book.

Mr. Cunningham said the Annual Town Meeting was tomorrow, March 26, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Haddad announced that the Annual Town Report was completed and published. He complimented Kara Cruikshank on the outstanding job she did putting the report together. He also pointed out new features in the Report that were created by Ms. Cruikshank.

Spring Town Meeting Update

Jason Kauppi, the Moderator, was in attendance for the discussion.

Mr. Haddad clarified that the \$5.5 million override vote scheduled for April 2nd will not be affected by any changes made to the budget during the upcoming Town Meeting. He mentioned that a recent article in the Groton Herald has caused confusion by stating that any changes to the budget would result in changes to the override, but this is not the case. Mr. Haddad added that early voting has already started.

Mr. Haddad explained that the Town of Westford had rescheduled their Town Meeting over the weekend due to a high attendance of approximately 1600 people. As a result, their Town Meeting has been moved to May 4th. Mr. Haddad wanted to discuss the preparations for Groton's Town Meeting with the Select Board and Moderator. He explained that Groton's IT Department had contacted the Town of Lancaster to borrow 300 compatible clickers, bringing Groton's total to 900. The Performing Arts Center (PAC) can accommodate up to 800 people, with an additional spillover room in the cafeteria for 100 people. A third spillover room would cause logistical problems for the Moderator and would be very difficult to provide a live feed for the meeting. Mr. Kauppi said if the meeting attendees exceed 900, it would be a great sign of people's interest and concern for their town's future. He explained that, per the state law, Chapter 39, Section 10, the Town Meeting would have to be stopped immediately and recessed. Mr. Kauppi would need to either address the issue or consult with the Select Board on postponing the meeting to a later date with a facility that could accommodate everyone attending. If there are over 900 people who attend and there are people who can't participate, the Moderator

will convene the meeting and then dissolve the meeting. The Select Board would then have to post a new meeting. Mr. Kauppi said that in his twelve years as the Moderator, the capacity of the PAC has never been exceeded. He has never had to moderate a meeting with an overflow room, but he is confident it could be managed if required. Mr. Kauppi assured everyone that the Town had done everything it could and that they would come up with a solution if there were too many voters. Mr. Cunningham asked for information about the check-in process. Mr. Haddad said check-in would begin at 6:00 p.m., and babysitting services would start earlier to accommodate parents. Mr. Haddad also assured everyone they had done everything possible to prepare for the Town Meeting. Ms. Manugian inquired about the cafeteria's capacity. Mr. Haddad said it could accommodate up to 100 people. The Board discussed alternative options and locations for rescheduling if the meeting reaches capacity.

Mr. Haddad and Mr. Kauppi had a conversation with Mr. Falk, Town Counsel, earlier that day. Mr. Falk pointed out that the Town's Bylaw specifies that the town election must occur on the fourth Tuesday after the first night of the Town Meeting. Mr. Haddad thought it was important to mention this fact. The Special Override Election will occur on April 2nd, and the Annual Election will still be held on April 23rd.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD #1

Sustainability Committee member Mr. Phil Francisco announced an upcoming seminar at the Groton Center on Wednesday, April 3rd, at 7:00 p.m. The panelists will include farmers from the Town and surrounding areas. Mr. Francisco encouraged everyone to attend.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Consider Ratifying the Town Manager's Appointment of Kristine Fox as the Department Assistant for the Council on Aging.

Mr. Reilly made a motion to ratify the Town Manager's Appointment of Kristine Fox as the Department Assistant for the Council on Aging, effective immediately. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. The vote carried unanimously.

2. Consider Ratifying the Town Manager's Appointment of Clayton Rutherford as the Custodian for the Department of Public Works.

Ms. Pine made a motion to ratify the Town Manager's Appointment of Clayton Rutherford as the Custodian for the Department of Public Works, effective April 1, 2024. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The vote carried unanimously.

3. Consider Ratifying the New Three-Year Agreement with Megan Foster to remain as the Town's Principal Assessor.

Ms. Foster, the Principal Assessor, was in attendance.

Ms. Foster has served as the Town's Principal Assessor for the last Four years and is up for reappointment at the end of this Fiscal year. Mr. Haddad said she has done an excellent job for the Town, and he was pleased with her performance. Pursuant to her current agreement with the Town, he notified her of his intention to reappoint her and began negotiations on a new three-year agreement. The new three-year agreement was provided to the Board for review and ratification. Mr. Haddad explained that most of the provisions would remain the same. However, he wanted to review two

specific changes with the Board. The first proposed change was a 2% increase in Salary for Fiscal Year 2025. This increase was consistent with the Supervisors Union's Contract and was already included in the Proposed FY 2025 Budget that will be presented at the Spring Town Meeting. The second proposed change was a Stipend of \$2,500 for maintaining Massachusetts Accreditation Assessor Designation, subject to Ms. Foster maintaining their accreditation. This will be presented at the 2024 Fall Town Meeting for funding, as it is due to be paid in December. He also included Juneteenth to Ms. Foster's holiday benefits.

Ms. Manugian made a motion to ratify the New Three-Year Agreement with Megan Foster to remain as the Town's Principal Assessor. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

4. FY 2025 Budget Update.

Mr. Haddad explained that Dr. Chesson had recommended that the Groton Dunstable Regional School Committee reduce their proposed Operational Assessment for Fiscal Year 2025 after receiving feedback from residents of Groton and Dunstable. This was done to ensure that Override Requests of \$5.5 million (Groton) and \$2.1 million (Dunstable) could last as long as possible. Dr. Chesson suggested delaying filling two positions required in FY 2025 and filling a Behavioral Interventionist and an English Language Learner teacher position by eliminating a Board-Certified Behavioral Analyst and a Team Chair. If these recommendations are implemented, the FY 2025 budget could be reduced by over \$300,000. Over \$900,000 could be saved in the next three years if the eliminated positions are determined never to be filled.

The School Committee voted, by a vote of five in favor, one opposed (Awa), and one abstention (Cheema) the following:

"The Groton Dunstable Regional School District Committee commits to adhere to the estimated budget established for the next three years, if the override passes, regardless of any new expenses that may arise or come in higher than estimated. Further, should the override pass, the GDRSC will direct the new superintendent to build his budgets with the understanding that he may not exceed what has been projected and that he should make every effort to reduce costs, if possible, while maintaining the same quality education that our students and families currently receive."

Mr. Haddad said that both of these actions were very important and were done to provide confidence to the taxpayers of Groton and Dunstable that the School District will work with the Towns to ensure that Override Funds last as long as possible.

The new assessment in FY 2025 shows a total reduction of \$232,304 to the Town of Groton. This reduction has reduced the amount needed from the \$5.5 million override in FY 2025 from \$1.7 million to \$1.4 million. It has also lowered the anticipated FY 2025 Tax Rate by \$0.08 from \$16.24 to \$16.16 and reduced the Override impact from \$431 to \$375, or \$56. Mr. Haddad explained that the Town Meeting Handout will include a new copy of the Budget for the Voters.

Mr. Cunningham wanted to discuss Chapter 70 because he thought it was important. The Chair of the Finance Committee, Mr. Robertson, expressed concern about the significant issue of Chapter 70. He

stated that low inflation is a huge problem and that the Town must take action to avoid disaster. Mr. Robertson explained that if the inflation number decreases, the problem with the state will also decrease. He also said budget cuts cannot be undone once made, so it's important to act now to prevent future issues.

Mr. Haddad wanted to discuss the compounding effect on a tax bill. He said several factors come into play when setting a tax rate, such as new growth, state aid, revenues, and estimated receipts. He explained how the tax rate fluctuates and used a tax bill as an example. He stated that municipal finance operates differently from straightforward accounting.

5. Update on Select Board Meeting Schedule Through the 2024 Spring Town Meeting

Monday, March 26, 2024	2024 Spring Town Meeting
Monday, April 1, 2024	No Meeting
Tuesday, April 2, 2024	Special Election - Override of Proposition 2 1/2
Monday, April 8, 2024	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, April 15, 2024	No Meeting- Patriots Day Holiday
Monday, April 22, 2024	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Tuesday, April 23, 2024	2024 Annual Town Election

ITEMS FOR SELECT BOARD CONSIDERATION AND ACTION

1. Review the Motions and Article Assignments for the 2024 Spring Town Meeting.

Mr. Haddad stated that he had enclosed a copy of the Motions for the Spring Town Meeting and the Article Assignments with the Town Manager's Report. He also provided the Proposed Budget Amendments to the Chief Opponent of the Budget for their review. Mr. Haddad reviewed them with the Board (see included in these minutes).

OTHER BUSINESS

ON-GOING ISSUES

- A. Green Communities Application and Implementation- Mr. Haddad said they have been working with consultants from RISE Engineering. He said there are new programs for the new stretch code, but he is still determining if the Town is eligible for the funding.

SELECT BOARD LIASON REPORTS

Public Comment Period #2

NONE

Approval of Minutes from March 11, 2024

Ms. Pine made a motion to approve the minutes of the regularly scheduled meeting of March 11, 2024. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:48 p.m.

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