



TOWN OF GROTON

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

Select Board

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

Town Manager
Mark W. Haddad

**SELECT BOARD MEETING
MONDAY, AUGUST 26, 2024
AGENDA**

**VIRTUAL MEETING
BROADCAST ON ZOOM AND THE GROTON CHANNEL
PURSUANT TO THE OPEN MEETING LAW
ZOOM MEETING ID: 872 9530 5781
PASSCODE: 879442**

- 6:00 P.M. Announcements and Review Agenda for the Public
- 6:01 P.M. Public Comment Period #1
- I. 6:05 P.M. Town Manager's Report
1. Update from Town Manager on Fiscal Year 2024 Country Club Budget/Operation
 2. Fiscal Year 2024 Fourth Quarter Financial Update
 3. Review First Draft of the 2024 Fall Town Meeting Warrant
 4. Authorize the Town Manager to Sign Host Community Agreement Waiver for United Cultivation
 5. Proposed Meeting Schedule Through the End of the Year
- II. 6:10 P.M. Items for Select Board Consideration and Action
1. Preliminary Discussion – Potential Liquor License for 9 West Main Street
 2. Award Prescott School Lease to Friends of Prescott

OTHER BUSINESS

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

- A. PFAS Issue
- B. Fiscal Year 2026 Budget
- C. Green Communities Application and Implementation
- D. Florence Roche Elementary School Construction Project
- E. PILOTs

SELECT BOARD LIAISON REPORTS

- III. Public Comment Period #2
- IV. Minutes: Regularly Scheduled Meeting of August 12, 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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Mark W. Haddad

To: *Select Board*

From: *Mark W. Haddad – Town Manager*

Subject: *Weekly Agenda Update/Report*

Date: *August 26, 2024*

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Please note that this week's meeting will be held remotely on Zoom due to the fact that the Town Clerk needs the Second Floor Meeting Room for Advance Processing for the September 3rd State Primary. Other than the Town Manager's Report, Items for Select Board Consideration and Action and a review of the On-going Issues List, there are no specific scheduled Agenda items.

1. Fiscal Year 2024 was another successful year for the Groton Country Club. It was a record year for revenue. The Club generated \$867,331 in revenue for FY 2024, which is \$72,962 more than FY 23 (another record year in which the Club generated \$794,369 in revenues). Based on the final expenditure total of \$854,972 (\$172,568 in salaries; \$253,111 in wages; \$223,824 in expenses; and \$205,469 in capital expenditures) the club made a slight profit of \$12,359. However, when you factor in overhead (health insurance, etc.), there was a taxpayer subsidy of \$49,016. That said, however, last year the Club generated a profit of \$119,713, so over a two year period, the Club has returned \$70,697 to the General Fund. I would like to point out that FY 24 saw a major increase in capital expenditures, including a new pool deck at a cost of \$110,000. This is the most we have ever spent on Capital Projects at the Club. These capital improvements are an important factor in bringing in new members at the Club, which has generated the record amount of revenue we generated in FY 24. Overall, I am extremely pleased with the Club's operation and would like to thank Shawn Campbell for his continued outstanding work at the Club.
2. Enclosed with this Report is the Fiscal Year 2024 Fourth Quarter Report. I would like to take a few minutes at Monday's meeting to review this report with the Board.
3. Enclosed with this Report is the First Draft of the 2024 Fall Town Meeting Warrant. I would also like to take some time at Monday's meeting reviewing this Warrant with the Board.

Select Board
Weekly Agenda Update/Report
August 26, 2024
page two

4. As I informed the Board at your last meeting, the Cannabis Control Commission has changed the regulations with regards to Host Community Agreements (HCA). They have made those changes retroactive to the beginning of the legalization of Recreational Marijuana in Massachusetts. What this means is that any HCA previously entered into would be subject to the new regulation requiring justification of the Impact Fee. As you may recall, we entered into an HCA with United Cultivation in which they would provide an Impact Fee of 3% of Gross Revenues for five years. We would be unable to establish justification for this fee. Therefore, it would be in the best interest of the Town to enter into a Waiver Agreement with United Cultivation eliminating this Fee. Enclosed with this report is the proposed Waiver Agreement. I would ask the Select Board to vote to authorize me to execute the Waiver on behalf of the Town. Please note that I will be recommending the same Waiver Agreement with the other Marijuana Establishment once they open for business. We can discuss this in more detail at Monday's meeting.

5. I would like to propose the following Meeting Schedule, which would take the Board through the end of the year:

Monday, September 2, 2024	-No Meeting (Labor Day)
Monday, September 9, 2024	-Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, September 16, 2024	-Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, September 23, 2024	-Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, September 30, 2024	-No Meeting
Saturday, October 5, 2024	-2024 Fall Town Meeting
Monday, October 7, 2024	- Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, October 14, 2024	-No Meeting (Indigenous People's Day)
Monday, October 21, 2024	-Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, October 28, 2024	-Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, November 4, 2024	-Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, November 11, 2024	-No Meeting (Veteran's Day)
Monday, November 18, 2024	-Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, November 25, 2024	-Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, December 2, 2024	-No Meeting
Monday, December 9, 2024	-Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, December 16, 2024	-Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, December 23, 2024	-No Meeting
Monday, December 30, 2024	-No Meeting
Monday, January 6, 2025	-Regularly Scheduled Meeting

This proposed schedule is obviously subject to change. I will work with the Chair to begin to schedule Agenda Items.

ITEMS FOR SELECT BOARD CONSIDERATION AND ACTION

1. Sachin Patel had contacted the Town to express an interest in obtaining the Liquor License that is designated for West Groton. As you will recall, a previous request for this license at the former Clover Farm was denied by the Board for a variety of reasons, including parking, trash and traffic. The Board's denial was upheld by the Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission. That said, Mr. Patel would like the Board to reconsider issuing a license at this location. Mr. Patel is doing his due diligence by meeting with various Boards and Departments. He has met with the Building Commissioner, Health Agent, Land Use Director, Police Chief, Planning Board, Park Commission and me to discuss his plans. The feedback thus far has been very positive for his plans, including parking and trash control. Continuing with his due diligence, before entering into any lease or purchase of the property, he would like to discuss his plans with the Select Board to determine if the Board would consider issuing the license. Should the feedback from the Board be positive, he would then pursue the property and apply for the formal license. Mr. Patel will be in attendance at Monday's meeting to discuss this in more detail.
2. The Friends of Prescott has leased the Prescott School since 2018. Their current lease expires at the end of this month. I advertised a Request for Proposals for the lease of the Prescott School. We received one proposal from the Friends. I have reviewed the proposal and I found it in compliance with the requirements of the RFP and rated it as advantageous based on the criteria outlined in the RFP as well. They are proposing the same terms, which is a \$20,000 annual rental fee, plus 5% of gross revenues less donations and grants. That said, I am recommending that the Select Board award the RFP to the Friends and authorize me to enter into negotiations with the Friends for another Lease that would run from September 1, 2024 through December 31, 2027. We can discuss this in more detail at Monday's meeting.

MWH/rjb
enclosure

Town of Groton
General Fund Statement of Revenues & Expenditures
June 30, 2024

	<i>Current Budget FY24</i>	<i>July - Jun Actual FY24</i>	<i>Variance to FY24 Budget</i>	<i>4th Qtr % of Budget</i>	<i>Final FY23 Budget</i>	<i>July - June Actual FY23</i>	<i>4th Qtr Variance to FY23 Budget</i>	<i>4th Qtr % of Budget</i>	<i>% of Budget Change</i>
Revenue									
State Aid (Lottery/Exempts)	1,116,143	1,107,723	(8,420)	99.25%	1,077,749	1,052,175	(25,574)	97.63%	101.66%
Motor Vehicle/Boat Excise	1,820,583	2,059,898	239,315	113.14%	1,778,290	1,929,500	151,210	108.50%	104.28%
Local Option Meals Tax	247,000	263,134	16,134	106.53%	250,000	242,074	(7,926)	96.83%	110.02%
Local Option Room Occupancy Tax	150,000	207,533	57,533	138.36%	100,000	174,676	74,676	174.68%	79.21%
Marijuana Revenue	150,000	11,040	(138,960)	7.36%	0	0	0		
Penalties and Interest on Taxes	110,000	123,413	13,413	112.19%	110,000	180,735	70,735	164.30%	68.28%
Payments in Lieu of Taxes	346,500	354,890	8,390	102.42%	300,000	340,705	40,705	113.57%	90.18%
Groton Hill Music Ticket Fee	25,000	65,168	40,168	260.67%	0	21,148	21,148		
Other Charges for Service (Dunst)	98,000	102,272	3,272	103.31%	90,000	93,523	3,523	103.91%	99.42%
Country Club Revenue	700,000	866,731	166,731	123.82%	605,267	794,369	189,102	131.24%	94.35%
Fees (incl Van vouchers)	392,000	404,590	12,590	103.21%	385,446	420,806	35,360	109.17%	94.54%
Rentals (Cell Towers)	40,000	66,183	26,183	165.46%	32,000	81,409	49,409	254.40%	65.04%
Other Departmental Revenue	800,000	907,868	107,868	113.48%	775,000	834,488	59,488	107.68%	105.39%
Licenses and Permits	429,300	527,284	97,984	122.82%	315,681	800,579	484,898	253.60%	48.43%
Fines and Forfeits	10,000	11,336	1,336	113.36%	10,000	11,786	1,786	117.86%	96.18%
Investment Income	100,000	1,535,170	1,435,170	1535.17%	50,000	421,136	371,136	842.27%	182.27%
Misc Recurring (LRTA)	75,000	89,094	14,094	118.79%	6,936	111,611	104,675	1609.16%	7.38%
Misc (WC Reimb, Auction & Other)	3,000	26,617	23,617	887.23%	0	58,574	58,574		
Enterprise Allocation for Indirects	336,486	364,081	27,595	108.20%	291,664	291,583	(81)	99.97%	108.23%
Real Estate and Personal Prop	41,322,045	40,930,958	(391,087)	99.05%	39,160,747	39,116,511	(44,236)	99.89%	99.16%
Total Revenue	48,272,057	50,024,983	1,752,926	103.63%	45,338,780	46,977,388	1,638,608	103.61%	100.02%
Expenditures (Operating Expenses)									
General Government	2,887,869	2,686,510	201,359	93.03%	2,765,909	2,514,781	251,128	90.92%	102.32%
Public Safety General Fund**	4,829,799	4,644,783	185,016	96.17%	4,785,213	4,699,055	86,158	98.20%	97.93%
Department of Public Works	2,401,495	2,349,230	52,265	97.82%	2,511,616	2,426,749	84,867	96.62%	101.24%
Culture, Rec, & Citizen's Svcs	2,027,680	1,993,544	34,136	98.32%	1,979,752	1,943,220	36,532	98.15%	100.17%
Employee Benefits and Other*	4,689,903	4,669,930	19,973	99.57%	4,550,663	4,526,877	23,786	99.48%	100.09%
Total Operating Expenses	16,836,746	16,343,997	492,749	97.07%	16,593,153	16,110,682	482,471	97.09%	99.98%
Expenditures (Non -Operating Exp.)									
Special Articles Voted for Current Yr	838,084	637,546	200,538	76.07%	997,120	448,721	548,399	45.00%	169.04%
PY Articles/Enc(SeeUse of Enc Below)	896,127	473,850	422,277	52.88%	652,820	352,774	300,046	54.04%	97.85%
Education	27,718,371	27,718,371	0	100.00%	26,189,285	26,189,285	0	100.00%	100.00%
Debt Service	4,565,613	4,562,176	3,437	99.92%	3,618,172	3,614,162	4,010	99.89%	100.03%
Intergovernmental (State Offsets)	98,662	98,662	0	100.00%	95,249	95,249	0	100.00%	100.00%
Total Non - Operating Expenses	34,116,857	33,490,605	626,252	98.16%	31,552,646	30,700,191	852,455	97.30%	100.88%
Excess (Deficiency) Before OFS&U	(2,681,546)	190,381	2,871,927	-7.10%	(2,807,019)	166,515	2,973,534	-5.93%	119.73%
Other Financing Sources									
Transfers from Other Funds	1,390,509	1,390,509	0	100.00%	1,904,250	1,904,250	0	100.00%	100.00%
Use of Avail. Funds: Encumbrances	896,127	473,850	(422,277)	52.88%	652,820	352,774	(300,046)	54.04%	97.85%
Avail. Funds: F. C./Overlay Surplus	947,654	861,737	(85,917)	90.93%	804,705	724,048	80,657	89.98%	101.06%
Total OFS	3,234,290	2,726,096	(508,194)	84.29%	3,361,775	2,981,072	380,703	88.66%	95.05%
Other Financing Uses									
Overlay & Deficits to be Raised	180,567	180,567	0	100.00%	229,560	229,560	0	100.00%	100.00%
Transfers to Other Funds	309,605	309,605	0	100.00%	325,196	325,196	0	100.00%	100.00%
Total OFU	490,172	490,172	0	100.00%	554,756	554,756	0	100.00%	100.00%
Excess (Deficiency) Incl. OFS&U	62,572	2,426,305	2,363,733		0	2,592,831	2,592,831		

**\$332,689 = Dispatch Grants Awarded for FY24; \$292,118 offset to Dispatch Budget thru 6/30/24

**\$322,547 = Dispatch Grants Awarded for FY23; \$304,146 offset to Dispatch Budget thru 6/30/23

Town of Groton
General Fund Statement of Revenues & Expenditures
 June 30, 2024

	<i>Current Budget FY24</i>	<i>July - Jun Actual FY24</i>	<i>Variance to FY24 Budget</i>	<i>4th Qtr % of Budget</i>	<i>Final FY23 Budget</i>	<i>July - June Actual FY23</i>	<i>4th Qtr Variance to FY23 Budget</i>	<i>4th Qtr % of Budget</i>	<i>% of Budget Change</i>
Salaries/Wages Expenditures by Function of Government									
General Government:									
BOS/Town Manager	366,569	366,010	559	99.85%	359,619	354,711	4,908	98.64%	101.23%
Accountant	170,106	169,900	206	99.88%	154,045	154,046	(1)	100.00%	99.88%
Assessors	162,786	161,173	1,613	99.01%	150,831	150,353	478	99.68%	99.33%
Treasurer/Collector	231,025	230,065	960	99.58%	216,235	216,232	3	100.00%	99.58%
Personnel	95,050	95,050	0	100.00%	87,984	87,983	1	100.00%	100.00%
Information Technology	191,969	191,969	0	100.00%	183,250	183,175	75	99.96%	100.04%
Town Clerk/Elections	198,577	192,463	6,114	96.92%	204,707	204,614	93	99.95%	96.97%
Land Use Conservation Comm.	73,351	70,533	2,818	96.16%	73,971	73,972	(1)	100.00%	96.16%
Land Use Inspection Services	220,462	216,397	4,065	98.16%	220,329	215,305	5,024	97.72%	100.45%
Land Use (Planning)	95,921	95,171	750	99.22%	89,236	89,237	(1)	100.00%	99.22%
Total General Government	1,805,816	1,788,731	17,085	99.05%	1,740,207	1,729,628	10,579	99.39%	99.66%
Public Safety:									
Police Department	2,403,214	2,248,694	154,520	93.57%	2,371,593	2,350,642	20,951	99.12%	94.40%
Fire Department/Civil Defense	1,444,793	1,444,642	151	99.99%	1,455,370	1,426,066	29,304	97.99%	102.04%
Dispatch (paid from Gen Fund) **	455,757	455,757	0	100.00%	445,359	444,288	1,071	99.76%	100.24%
Animal Cntrl/Dog Officer	21,664	21,664	0	100.00%	19,164	19,164	0	100.00%	100.00%
Total Public Safety	4,325,428	4,170,757	154,671	96.42%	4,291,486	4,240,180	51,326	98.80%	97.59%
Department of Public Works:									
Municipal Buildings	139,507	138,182	1,325	99.05%	159,057	156,174	2,883	98.19%	100.88%
Highway	853,616	851,521	2,095	99.75%	870,898	870,894	4	100.00%	99.75%
Snow & Ice	153,025	153,025	0	100.00%	171,937	171,937	0	100.00%	100.00%
Parks	17,571	12,664	4,907	72.07%	17,481	13,804	3,677	78.97%	91.26%
Solid Waste	154,315	148,581	5,734	96.28%	150,995	145,954	5,041	96.66%	99.61%
Total DPW	1,318,034	1,303,973	14,061	98.93%	1,370,368	1,358,763	11,605	99.15%	99.78%
Culture, Rec. & Citizen's Svcs:									
COA/COA Van	269,829	269,270	559	99.79%	266,772	266,362	410	99.85%	99.94%
Vets Svcs/Water Safety/Graves	10,930	7,660	3,270	70.08%	10,668	8,770	1,898	82.21%	85.25%
Library	758,911	754,698	4,213	99.44%	770,599	757,964	12,635	98.36%	101.10%
Country Club	425,790	425,679	111	99.97%	407,867	405,461	2,406	99.41%	100.56%
Total Culture, Rec. & Citizen's Svcs	1,465,460	1,457,307	8,153	99.44%	1,455,906	1,438,557	17,349	98.81%	100.64%
Grand Total Salaries & Wages	8,914,738	8,720,768	193,970	97.82%	8,857,967	8,767,108	90,859	98.97%	98.84%
Benefits:									
County Retirement	2,494,280	2,494,280	0	100.00%	2,538,910	2,538,910	0	100.00%	100.00%
Health / Life Insurance *	2,033,823	2,020,684	13,139	99.35%	1,829,743	1,814,711	15,032	99.18%	100.17%
Other Benefits (Medicare/Unemplmt)	161,800	154,966	6,834	95.78%	182,010	173,256	8,754	95.19%	100.62%
Total Benefits	4,689,903	4,669,930	19,973	99.57%	4,550,663	4,526,877	23,786	99.48%	100.09%
Total Salaries/Wages/Benefits	13,604,641	13,390,698	213,943	98.43%	13,408,630	13,293,985	114,645	99.14%	99.28%

**\$135,682 = Dispatch Wage Grants Awarded for FY24; \$127,548 offset to Dispatch Budget thru 6/30/24

** \$133,330 = Dispatch Wage Grants Awarded for FY23; \$118,841 offset to Dispatch Budget thru 6/30/23



Host Community Agreement Waiver Form

Instructions

Pursuant to G. L. c. 94G, §3(d)(4), 935 Code Mass. Regs. (“CMR”) § 500.180(3) and/or 935 CMR 501.180(3), all initial license and license renewal applications submitted or resubmitted to the Commission on or after March 1, 2024, require a compliant Host Community Agreement (“HCA”) or compliant HCA Waiver to be included as part of the submission. A Host Community may waive the regulatory requirement to have a compliant HCA by submitting an HCA Waiver to the Commission that complies with 935 CMR 500.180(5) and/or 935 CMR 501.180(5). If an HCA Waiver is executed, the Host Community shall satisfy the submission requirement of the statute by providing the license applicant or licensee with the fully executed HCA Waiver Form for the license applicant and/or licensee to include as part of the initial license and/or license renewal application.¹

Please note that an executed HCA Waiver constitutes a total relinquishment of the HCA requirement between the Host Community and license applicant or licensee. An HCA Waiver that is executed and recorded with the Commission remains in full force and effect until such time as it is rescinded. An HCA Waiver may only be rescinded upon Commission approval of an executed HCA.

Required Information

I. License Applicant / Licensee Section

1. **License Applicant / Licensee’s Business Name** (*The business name shall be registered with the Secretary of the Commonwealth, which must also be the same business name on the initial license application or license record.*):

UC Retail, LLC

¹ Under 935 CMR 500.002 definition, “Host Community Agreement (HCA) Waiver means a written statement executed by a Host Community and a License Applicant, or by a Host Community and a Marijuana Establishment or MTC, which expresses the parties' mutual intent to waive the regulatory requirement to have a Host Community Agreement”.



2. **Application / License Number Covered by the HCA Waiver** *(If the HCA Waiver is being executed by a license applicant only, please include the initial license application number(s) as provided in the Massachusetts Cannabis Industry Portal (“MassCIP”). If the HCA Waiver is being executed by a licensee, please include the license number(s) as provided in MassCIP—do not provide the license renewal application(s). If the HCA Waiver is being executed for a business that is applying for a new license but already has other license(s), the business may enter both the initial license application number(s) and license number(s).):*

MR284616

3. **Name of the License Applicant / Licensee’s Authorized Representative:**

Michael Spengler

4. **Signature of the License Applicant / Licensee’s Authorized Representative** *(By signing this document, the named person above attests that they are an Authorized Representative by the License Applicant or Licensee’s Business and that the HCA Waiver was mutually agreed upon by both parties and executed in good faith.):*

Michael Spengler

Digitally signed by Michael Spengler
Date: 2024.08.14 10:09:15 -04'00'

5. **Signature Date of the License Applicant / Licensee’s Authorized Representative:**

8/14/24

II. Host Community Section

1. **Name of Host Community:**

Town of Groton

2. **Name of the Host Community’s Authorized Representative:**

Mark W. Haddad - Town Manager



3. **Signature of the Host Community's Authorized Representative** *(By signing this document, the named person above attests that they are an Authorized Representative of the Host Community and that the HCA Waiver was mutually agreed upon by both parties and executed in good faith.):*

4. **Signature Date of the Host Community's Authorized Representative:**



**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, AUGUST 12, 2024
UN-APPROVED**

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

Also Present: Mark Haddad, Town Manager; Kara Cruikshank, Executive Assistant to the Town Manager; Hannah Moller, Treasurer/Tax Collector; Patricia DuFresne, Assistant Director of Finance/Town Accountant; Dawn Dunbar, Town Clerk; Brian Callahan, DPW Director In Training; Representative Margaret Scarsdale; Senator John Cronin; Representative Danillo Sena; Michelle Collette, Stormwater Inspector; Bud Robertson.

Ms. Manugian called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Cunningham announced that Representative Scarsdale, Representative Sena, and Senator Cronin were in attendance.

Mr. Haddad announced that the Groton Hill Music Center has sent the Town of Groton its Quarter 2, 2024 PILOT payment in the amount of \$19,300. He expressed gratitude to the Groton Hill Music Center. He also explained that Groton Hill Music hosted the Groton Dunstable High School graduation at no cost to the district. The 2024 graduation was a huge success, and the Groton Hill has already agreed to host the Groton Dunstable High School graduation again in 2025.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD #1

Ms. Michelle Collette announced that on August 17, 2024, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., the Groton History Center will dedicate a garden bench in memory of Mr. Leroy Johnson, Jr.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

- 1. Consider Ratifying the Town Manager's Appointments of Johnna Brissette as the Departmental Assistant for the Groton Police Department and Andrew Glanville to the Groton Country Club Golf Staff.**

Mr. Reilly made a motion to ratify the Town Manager's appointment of Johnna Brissette as the Departmental Assistant for the Groton Police Department and Andrew Glanville to the Groton Country Club Golf Staff. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

- 2. Notification of the Temporary Absence of the Town Manager and the Appointment of Takashi Tada as Acting Town Manager During the Temporary Absence.**

Mr. Haddad announced that he will be on vacation from August 17th through August 25th. He has appointed Mr. Takashi Tada as the Acting Town Manager in his absence.

3. Call for the Establishment of a Charter Review Committee Pursuant to Chapter 7-6 of the Groton Charter.

One of the Select Board's Annual Goals is to establish a Charter Review Committee to update (along with a formal review) the Groton Charter to allow for changes in how the positions of Police Chief, Fire Chief, and Town Clerk are selected/filled. Mr. Haddad reviewed Section 7-6 of the Charter and respectfully requested the Board to vote to establish a Charter Review Committee. Mr. Haddad will then alert the Finance Committee, Moderator, and School Committee of their need to make appointments to the Committee. He also requested the Select Board to establish a deadline for making appointments to this Committee.

Ms. Pine motioned, pursuant to Section 7-6 of the Charter, to establish a Charter Review Committee. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion.

Discussion

The Board discussed the application process. Mr. Haddad suggested that the Select Board advertise and receive applications for their appointees. The Board discussed and agreed with this process, set the application deadline for Monday, September 16th, and will conduct interviews on September 23rd.

The motion carried unanimously.

4. Determine the Final Solution for Repairs of the Island Road Bridge.

Mr. Brian Callahan, DPW Director in Training, was present for the discussion. Mr. Haddad explained at the Select Board meeting on July 15th that the Board reviewed the proposed repair to the Island Road Bridge as suggested by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT). Their proposed repair involves installing a 54-inch culvert to replace the current dilapidated bridge. During the discussion, several community members objected to the proposed repair and offered alternative solutions. MassDOT clarified that they would not pay for any solution other than the one they proposed. Mr. Haddad met with MassDOT, along with Tom Delaney, Kara Cruikshank, Alison Manugian, and Bud Robertson. He also invited Ron Hersch and Alex Woodle of the Great Ponds Advisory Committee to the meeting. During the meeting, they reviewed the proposed solution from MassDOT and some ideas raised at the July 15th meeting by others. MassDOT made it very clear that the State would not pay for alternative solutions and that the amount of testing required to propose a new solution would cost in the neighborhood of \$150,000+. The Board is left with either agreeing with the State's proposal or having the Town appropriate upwards of \$200,000 to study potential bridge repairs further and then pay for those repairs. Mr. Haddad said that he could not recommend to the Select Board and Finance Committee that they take on this liability when the State proposes and pays for a solution that would solve the issue. He also explained that Mass Highway has agreed to install a 60-inch culvert instead of a 54-inch culvert. Mr. Haddad noted that someone unknown had removed the beaver dam without a permit. The mud below it was also cleared, and this individual was identified. The Conservation Commission is aware, and the appropriate action will be taken. Mr. Pisani expressed concern about maximizing the water flow. Ms. Pine said she was in favor of the solution and wanted to thank Mr. Val Prest for presenting a creative solution at the July 15th Select Board meeting. She mentioned that the town cannot use the described homegrown method due to liability concerns. Mr. Reilly appreciated Mr.

Prest's opinion and noted that the town lacks the necessary funds, but this solution will improve what is currently there.

Mr. Cunningham made a motion to approve the installation of a 60-inch culvert, as proposed by MassDOT, for repairing the Island Road Bridge. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Proposed Select Board Meeting Schedule through Labor Day.

Monday, August 19, 2024	No Meeting
Monday, August 26, 2024 (Remote)	First Review of the Fall Town Meeting Warrant Consider Award of RFP for the Lease of the Prescott School
Monday, September 2, 2024	No Meeting

ITEMS FOR SELECT BOARD CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL

1. Approve the Request from the Town Clerk to Create a Marriage Certificate Corrections Fee.

Ms. Dawn Dunbar, Town Clerk was in attendance for the discussion. The Town Clerk is requesting that the Board establish a "Marriage Certificate Corrections" Fee due to the fact that a majority of weddings are now being performed by either a Justice of the Peace or by those obtaining a one-day solemnization certificate from the Commonwealth. She explained that errors are being made on the marriage license application because those conducting the ceremonies are not experienced in filling out their portion of the marriage license after the ceremony occurs. The Town Clerk's Office is spending a lot of time correcting the licenses and communicating with the couples and/or their officiant to have them re-complete their portion of the license. Vital Records is extremely particular with how these are filled out; therefore, the Town Clerk's Office must ensure they are filled out correctly. To help cover the extra time, a fee of \$30 is being requested. Mr. Haddad explained these fees would go into the general fund.

Ms. Pine moved to accept a \$30 "Marriage Certificate Corrections" fee, effective immediately. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

2. Establish the Stormwater Fee for Fiscal Year 2025.

Mr. Haddad explained that the Board needed to set the Stormwater Fee for Fiscal Year 2025. He said the Budget approved at the May 18, 2024 Special Town Meeting included a minor increase of \$5,331. Mr. Haddad respectfully recommended that the Board set the fee at \$60, which would be the third consecutive year in a row at this rate.

Ms. Pine made a motion to approve a \$60 Stormwater Fee for Fiscal Year 2025. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Consider Approving a One-Day Wine and Malt Beverage License for the Groton Business Association for the GBA Meeting to be held at United Cultivation, 489 Main Street, on September 18, 2024, from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm.

Mr. Pisani made a motion to approve a One-Day Wine and Malt Beverage License for the Groton Business Association for the GBA Meeting to be held at United Cultivation, 489 Main Street, on

September 18, 2024, from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

- 4. Consider Approving a One-Day Wine and Malt Beverage License for the Groton Historical Society for the Tarbell Exhibit Opening to be held at the Boutwell House, 172 Main Street, on Saturday, September 21, 2024, from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

Mr. Cunningham made a motion to approve a One-Day Wine and Malt Beverage License for the Groton Historical Society for the Tarbell Exhibit Opening to be held at the Boutwell House, 172 Main Street, on Saturday, September 21, 2024, from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

- 5. Consider Approving a One Day All Alcoholic Beverage License for the Friends of Prescott for Do You Think You Know About Vodka to be held on Friday, August 16, 2024, from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.**

Mr. Pisani made a motion to approve a One-Day All Alcoholic Beverage License for the Friends of Prescott for Do You Think You Know About Vodka to be held on Friday, August 16, 2024, from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

6:15 CONSIDER ADOPTING AND ISSUING A RESOLUTION TO GOVERNOR HEALEY TO DECLARE A STATE OF EMERGENCY REGARDING THE CLOSURE OF NASHOBA VALLEY MEDICAL CENTER.

Representative Scarsdale, Senator Cronin, and Representative Sena were present for the discussion. Mr. Haddad thanked the Senator and Representatives for attending.

The Board discussed considering adopting and issuing an Emergency Resolution to Governor Maura Healey on the closure of the Nashoba Valley Medical Center. Mr. Haddad provided the Board with a copy of the proposed Resolution to review.

Senator Cronin said he was advocating for three actions regarding the hospital: First, he has called on the Governor to declare a public health emergency to keep the hospital open; Second, they need to seek a new operator to take over from Steward, including determining why the Michigan group did not qualify as a bidder during federal bankruptcy proceedings; Lastly, the state needs to stabilize Noshoba by providing bridge funding between August 31st and a new operator taking over the hospital. He said everyone needs to articulate the impact of losing this medical facility and put pressure on the administration. He said personal stories need to be shared so they can understand the implications.

Representative Sena said they had sent letters to the Governor asking for help and to extend the closure beyond August 31st in an effort to keep the hospital open. They are doing everything they can, expressed gratitude for the town's support, and emphasized the need for ongoing efforts to continue.

Representative Scarsdale said it was very important for the Commissioner of the Department of Health to hear directly from the fire chiefs about the impact on the surrounding communities. She explained that one bidder was deemed unacceptable, but two other bidders were still negotiating with the state. She encourages everyone to attend the Thursday, August 15th meeting at Devens Common at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Cunningham stated that the Commonwealth should have had representation in the bankruptcy proceedings due to the real and unacceptable public health emergency that will impact lives. He said their advocacy was appreciated.

Mr. Cunningham moved to adopt and issue a Resolution to Governor Healey to Declare a State of Emergency. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

ON-GOING ISSUES

- A. PFAS ISSUE- Mr. Haddad explained that the Town met with the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) on Wednesday, August 7th, to discuss an interbasin transfer, which will be on their September 12 agenda for approval. He explained that they have authorization to go out to bid in September with the contingency. The plans are prepared and ready to proceed with the project.

Mr. Haddad explained that they were involved in the Dupont and 3M lawsuit regarding PFAS. There is a special allocation fund for special projects and money that has been allocated so far. The town has submitted another application for the \$402,000 for the engineering costs they have incurred, and the school district has spent over \$500,000 on PFAS. They are trying to recoup some of that money.

- B. Fiscal Year 2026 Budget—The first Tri-Comm meeting will be held on August 28, 2024.
- C. Green Communities Application and Implementation- The town will apply for funding next spring since the previous grant work was not completed, making the town ineligible.
- D. Florence Roche School Construction Project—Mr. Haddad said the teachers began moving into the new Florence Roche Elementary School on August 5th and 6th. The final paving is expected to be completed by August 13th, and scheduled tours for members of the community in the upcoming week are fully booked. An open house is planned for the Spring, and there will be a ribbon-cutting ceremony.
- E. PILOTS—The Town Manager’s Working Group on Studying PILOTS had its first meeting this past week. Mr. Haddad provided the Board with a memorandum to update them on the status of their review and to receive feedback from the Select Board. The first step in the process was to develop a list of all exempt properties in Groton to determine whether or not a particular Non-Profit/Property Owner should be approached about making a PILOT or codifying the current payment. He said there are currently 590 exempt properties/parcels in the Town of Groton, with 10 currently providing the Town of Groton with a PILOT. The Town collected approximately \$420,000 from these ten organizations. The Working Group has developed the following initial “Rules of Exemption”:
1. State Property-including Property owned by the MBTA
 2. Federal Property
 3. Properties purchase with Community Preservation Act Funds
 4. Properties that have a Permanent Conservation Restriction
 5. Town of Groton Properties/Buildings under the control of the Groton Select Board

6. Town of Groton Properties /Buildings that are Operated/Funded within the Tax Levy

Mr. Haddad said the Working Group believes a good start has been made for a set of rules. Ms. Pine suggested that one way to assess the enterprises is to quantify how the money is coming. Mr. Haddad wants the Board to consider delaying the Home Rule Petition until the Working Group does more work in the Spring. He said it is a process that they need to follow. Mr. Pisani said they must communicate when it will be presented and explain why. Mr. Cunningham said they need to explain the reasoning to the community. Mr. Haddad said the PILOT Working Group is meeting again on Wednesday, September 4th.

SELECT BOARD LIASON REPORTS

None

Public Comment Period #2

None

Approval of the Regularly Scheduled Meeting Minutes of July 29, 2024

Mr. Cunningham made a motion to approve the minutes of the regularly scheduled meeting of July 29, 2024. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:18 p.m. Respectively submitted by Kara Cruikshank, Executive Assistant to the Town Manager.

Revised: 08/15/2024

Warrant, Summary, and Recommendations

TOWN OF GROTON



2024 FALL TOWN MEETING

Groton-Dunstable Middle School Auditorium
344 Main Street, Groton, Massachusetts 01450

Beginning Saturday, October 5, 2024 @ 9:00 AM

Attention Voters

Please bring this Document to Town Meeting

Introduction to Groton Town Meeting

Voters are familiar with casting ballots in local and state elections, but they have another important civic duty in towns, the Town Meeting.

What is Town Meeting?

The Town Meeting is the legislative body in the town form of government in Massachusetts. Town Meeting is a formal gathering of registered voters who propose, debate and vote on measures. Groton holds at least two Town Meetings per year.

What is a warrant?

The warrant is the official notice to voters that a Town Meeting is scheduled. The warrant includes the date, time, location and a description of each subject to be acted on at Town Meeting. In Groton, the warrant must be posted in two public places and mailed to each household 14 days in advance of Town Meeting. “The warrant must contain a sufficient description of what is proposed so as to constitute an adequate warning to all the inhabitants of the town.”¹ “Every action taken at the meeting must be pursuant to some article in the warrant and must be within the scope of such article.”²

How does Town Meeting proceed?

Voters attending Town Meeting must first check in with the clerks and receive an electronic voting handset which is required to vote. The meeting typically acts on the articles in the order they are printed in the warrant. For each article, a main motion is made and seconded by voters and placed by the moderator on the floor for debate. Permission of the moderator is required to speak. The moderator presides and regulates the proceedings, decides all questions of order, and calls and declares all votes. After debate has ended, the moderator will call for a vote by use of the electronic voting handset.

¹ *Town Meeting Time: A Handbook of Parliamentary Law* (page 12) Johnson, Trustman and Wadsworth, Third Edition, 2001.

² *Id.*

Who can attend?

Town Meeting is open to the public. Only Groton voters are entitled to attend, speak and vote. Non-voters may be required to sit in a separate section. Non-voters may ask the moderator to speak on the topic of the debate.

How long is Town Meeting?

Town Meeting concludes when all articles on the warrant have been acted upon. Town Meeting may conclude in one session or adjourn for subsequent sessions.

Explanation of a Consent Agenda

A consent agenda is a procedure to group multiple main motions into a single motion for voting. A consent agenda saves time by eliminating the reading of multiple motions and explanations when there are no objections or questions. In Groton, a consent agenda generally consists of articles unanimously supported by the Select Board and Finance Committee. Articles that change by-laws or introduce new spending are typically not included. In this warrant, the Select Board has grouped articles in consent agendas and labeled them for easy reference.

How Consent Agendas Work

As the first step to act on a consent agenda, the moderator will read the titles of the included articles. A voter who wishes to remove an article from the consent agenda for separate debate and vote should state “hold.” The held article will be set aside and acted on after the vote on the consent agenda. After the meeting agrees on the contents of the consent agenda, there will be no debate and the moderator will immediately call for a vote. Every motion included in the consent agenda will either pass or fail as a group. Voters should read the warrant and review the proposed consent agendas to identify articles they wish to remove for separate consideration.

Electronic Voting at Town Meeting



Voting at Town Meeting will be conducted using an electronic voting system purchased by the Town of Groton as authorized by Town Meeting in October, 2022. Instead of using placards to be raised and counted, voters will use wireless handsets to cast their vote quickly, accurately and privately.

Voter Check-In

At check-in, voters will be given a handset. No record is made of which voter receives which handset. All handsets will be tested prior to the meeting. Voters physically unable to use a handset will be seated in a manual-count section and their votes will be counted by tellers. For those with visual impairments, large handsets with braille are available.

Test Vote

At the beginning of the meeting, the Moderator will conduct a test vote to get everyone comfortable with the voting procedures.

Proxy Voting Prohibited

The handset given to a voter at check-in is for the exclusive use of that voter. Voting with a handset that has been issued to another individual is strictly forbidden.

Voting

When the Moderator announces it is time to vote:

- Press 1A (green button) for YES →
- Press 2B (red button) for No →
- If you wish to not vote, press no buttons



Handset Display

The display on the handset:

- OK means the system receiver has received your vote
- A "1" for Yes or "2" for No shows the vote the system received.
- The small "R" at the top of the screen indicates the handset is communicating with the receiver
- The icons in the top left indicate the WiFi signal strength.

Help Desk

A Help Desk will be able to assist voters who have trouble with using the handset. If a handset malfunctions, a voter will receive a new handset.

Handset Return

If you leave the meeting temporarily, please keep the handset with you. If the meeting ends or you leave, return the handset to the check-in table.



Town Meeting Access for Voters with Disabilities

Parking – Universally accessible parking spaces are available in the parking lot in front of the Groton Dunstable Middle School South. There is a ramp providing access from the parking lot to the front door of the Middle School.

Wheelchair Accessible & Companion Seating – Wheelchair spaces, seating for people with mobility issues and companion seats are available in the center aisle on both sides of the auditorium.

Sign Language – A Sign Language Interpreter will be provided for the hearing impaired, upon request, at least one week prior to the meeting.

Speaking at Town Meeting – There will be volunteers available to bring hand-held microphones to voters who have mobility issues or cannot stand in line and wait at the microphones.

Restrooms – Accessible restrooms are available near the entrance to the auditorium.

Transportation to Town Meeting - The Council on Aging van will be available to Groton residents attending Town Meetings at no charge. All riders will be at the meeting prior to the start. The van is wheelchair accessible. Your reservation can be made by calling the Senior Center at 978-448-1170. Seats will be filled on a first come, first serve basis.

Questions or concerns - If you or a member of your household has questions or would like to request a sign language interpreter, please contact the Select Board's Office at Town Hall at 978 448-1111 at least one week before the Town Meeting.

**FALL TOWN MEETING WARRANT
OCTOBER 5, 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, 344 Main Street, Groton, Massachusetts in said Town on Saturday, the fifth day of October, 2024 at Nine O'clock in the morning, to consider the following:

ARTICLE LISTINGS

Article 1*	Prior Year Bills	6
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Article 3*	Transfer Money Into Capital Stabilization Fund	7
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*Will be presented as one motion as a Consent Agenda

Article 1: 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. Please see the Town Manager's Report starting on page __ for additional information related to this Article.*

Article 2: Amend the Fiscal Year 2025 Town Operating Budget

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Fiscal Year 2025 Operating Budget as adopted under Article 15 of the May 18, 2024 Special Town Meeting and vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds a sum or sums of money as may be necessary to defray the expenses of the Town for Fiscal Year 2025, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Finance Committee

Select Board

Town Manager

Select Board: *See Town Manager's Report for Recommendation Beginning on Page __*

Finance Committee: *See Town Manager's Report for Recommendation Beginning on Page __*

Summary: *The Fiscal Year 2025 Town Operating Budget was approved at the May 18, 2024 Special Town Meeting. Any changes to this Budget would have to be made prior to setting the tax rate. The purpose of this article is to make any necessary changes to balance the FY 2025 Operating Budget. Please see the Town Manager's Report starting on page __ for additional information related to this Article.*

Article 3: *Transfer Money Into the Capital Stabilization Fund*

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 added to the sum already on deposit in the Capital Stabilization Fund, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Select Board

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: *As of the printing of this Warrant, the Fund has a balance of \$79,067. The financial management goal is to achieve and maintain a balance in the Capital Stabilization Fund equal to 1.5% of the total annual budget. The target amount for the Capital Stabilization Fund will be provided at Town Meeting. Please see the Town Manager's Report starting on page __ for additional information related to this Article.*

Article 4: *Transfer Money into the Stabilization Fund*

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 added to the sum already on deposit in the Stabilization Fund, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Select Board

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: *As of the printing of this Warrant, the balance in this fund is \$2,617,198. The financial management goal is to achieve and maintain a balance in the Fund equal to 5% of the total annual budget. The target amount for the Fund will be provided at Town Meeting. Please see the Town Manager's Report starting on page __ for additional information related to this Article.*

Article 5: *Transfer Money into the GDRSD Capital Stabilization Fund*

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 added to the sum already on deposit in the Town of Groton Capital Stabilization Fund for the Groton Dunstable Regional School District, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Summary: *As of the printing of the Warrant, the balance in this fund is \$720. This fund covers the Town of Groton’s share of the Groton Dunstable Regional School District Committee’s long-range Capital Plan to address its capital needs. The target amount will be provided at Town Meeting. Please see the Town Manager’s Report starting on page __ for additional information related to this Article.*

Article 6: *Revoke Opioid Settlements Special Purpose Stabilization Fund*

To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to Chapter 40, Section 5B of the Massachusetts General Laws, to revoke the Opioid Settlement Stabilization Fund as created by Article 7 of the 2023 Spring Town Meeting, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Summary: *The Town of Groton has been eligible to receive settlement payments from various opioid makers for the prevention, harm reduction, treatment and recovery of individuals harmed by the use of opioids. Opioid settlement funds currently on deposit as well as all future settlement funds received will be deposited into the Special Revenue Fund. Groton is expecting to receive approximately \$40,000 through 2038. At the time of the initial settlement payments, the State had the Town’s create a Special Purpose Stabilization Fund to receive and disburse funds. They have since simplified the process to allow Municipalities to create a Special Revenue Fund instead that will allow communities better access to the Funds for purposes identified in the settlement agreements. As the Special Purpose Stabilization Fund is no longer needed, this Article seeks to revoke its creation.*

Article 7: *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 2025 Water Enterprise Budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Board of Water Commissioners

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: *This Article will seek a transfer from the Water Enterprise Fund Surplus to the Fiscal Year 2025 Water Department’s General Expense Budget for the purchase of a new Pick-Up Truck as identified in the Capital Plan. Please see the Town Manager’s Report starting on page __ for additional information related to this Article.*

Article 8: *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 2025 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 2025 Center Sewer Budget. Please see the Town Manager’s Report starting on page __ for additional information related to this Article.*

Article 9: *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 2025 Four Corners Sewer Budget. Please see the Town Manager's Report starting on page __ for additional information related to this Article.*

Article 10: *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, an additional 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: *Article 7 of the May 21, 2021 Spring Town Meeting appropriated \$1,405,374 for the new Middle School Track. The May 18, 2024 Special Town Meeting appropriated \$235,072 for Debt Service for this project. The Community Preservation Committee would like to increase this amount by \$100,000 to \$335,072 by increasing the amount toward the principal debt.*

Article 11: *Water Supply System for Heritage Landing*

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 design, bid specifications, bidding, construction, and construction administration of a water supply system at Heritage Landing at Cow Pond Brook Road, to authorize the Town Manager to apply for a MassWorks Development Grant for such project; provided, that no funds may be expended hereunder for construction purposes unless and until the Town has received a MassWorks Development Grant for the project, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Board of Water Commissioners

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Summary: *This article will allow the Select Board to borrow \$2,509,600.00 for the design and construction of a water supply system on Cow Pond Brook Road for the Heritage Landing Housing Development Project. The Town would borrow these funds contingent upon a successful award of a Mass Works Development Grant from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Said funds shall not be expended unless the grant is awarded to the Town.*

Article 12: Funding for Security Improvements at Sargisson Beach

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 security improvements at Sargisson Beach and the Sargisson Beach Parking Area, including the purchasing of cameras, servers, installation of a structure to house equipment, and all related equipment and expenses to carry out these improvements, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: *For the past two years, Sargisson Beach and the Parking Area has seen an increase in illegal dumping of trash and other related items that has impacted not only the ecosystem, but the recreational integrity of the Beach. The Town has taken some steps to improve security, but better cameras and related equipment is necessary to provide protection and oversight of the area. The Town does not have the manpower to patrol the area at all times and these security improvements will mitigate these issues at the Beach and parking area.*

Article 13: Funding To Purchase Budget Software for the Town of Groton

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 purchase Budget Software, and all costs incidental and related thereto, for the Town of Groton, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: *The purpose of this Article is to appropriate the necessary funding for the Town's Finance Department to purchase software for the creation of the Town's Annual Operating and Capital Budgets. For the last 16 years, the Town Manager has relied on Excel to create the Town's Budget. While this has been an adequate format, it is time to move the Town forward. With the current Town Manager expected to retire in the next few years, establishing a new formal Budget Process with strong historical data will allow for a seamless transition with regard to budgeting.*

Article 14: *Engineering Funds for Complete Streets Grant Work*

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, and/or borrow from any applicable statute, a sum or sums of money, to be expended by the Town Manager, for the purpose of paying engineering costs, and other related costs, for work associated with successfully receiving Grant Funding from the Commonwealth under the Complete Streets Grant Program, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Complete Streets Committee

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Summary: *The Complete Streets Committee has successfully received over \$750,000 in Grant Funding from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts under their Complete Streets Program. Some of the projects covered by the funding have been sidewalks on West Main Street and Lowell Road, along with Pedestrian Crossing Devices along Main Street. The Committee is in the process of preparing another Grant Application this Fall. One of the requirements for this program is that the Town has to cover engineering costs for any approved project. The Committee is seeking \$40,000 for this purpose.*

Article 15: *Amend Purpose of CPA Project for Improvements to Baseball Diamond*

To see if the Town will vote to amend the purpose of CPC Proposal D "Rebuild Major League Baseball Diamond", as voted under Article 14 of the 2023 Spring Town Meeting, to allow for a comprehensive study and development of bid specifications for improvements to Town Field, including the Major League Diamond, Little League Field, Gazebo and Playground, and all costs associated and related thereto, or to take any other action relative thereto.

***Community Preservation Committee
Town Manager***

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Summary: *The 2023 Spring Town Meeting appropriated \$80,000 for improvements to the major league diamond at Town Field. This funding is not enough to design and construct the improvements. The Town Manager has approached the Community Preservation Committee and asked to use these funds to conduct a comprehensive study of Town Field and come back with proposed improvements to enhance the recreational facility. It is the intent of the Town Manager to submit a formal project to the CPC for Fiscal Year 2026.*

Article 16: *Squannacook River Dam*

To see if the Town will vote to authorize Select Board and Town Manager to remove the Squannacook River Dam and to authorize the Town Manager to apply for any and all State and Federal Grants to pay for said removal and to authorize the Town Manager to take all necessary steps for said removal, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Select Board

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Summary: *This Article is being brought before the Town Meeting to advise the Select Board on the matter of the future of the Squannacook River Dam. The Dam, located in West Groton near the RiverCourt Residences, has two owners. The Town of Groton, which owns half the Dam, has spent funds to repair and annually test the Dam. This half is in reasonably good shape. The other owner, a Shirley Resident (half the Dam is located in Shirley), has neglected the other half of the Dam and it is not in good shape. The Town of Groton is faced with either finding a way to repair the Shirley side of the Dam or move forward with its removal. The Town applied for a State Grant that conducted a Study on removing the Dam and its environmental impact. While there is still the opportunity for repair, removal is a reasonable alternative. More information on the impact of removal and the cost of repair will be provided at Town Meeting.*

Article 17: Disposition of Town Owned Land on Hoyts Warf Road

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to sell and/or lease, for a period not to exceed 99 years, that certain property located off Hoyts Wharf Road of approximately __ acres containing portions of Parcels 249-51 and 249-57 as shown on the concept plan entitled “_____” dated _____, 2024, a copy of which is on file in the Town Clerk’s office, and otherwise dispose of any portions thereof and interests therein for such consideration and on such terms and conditions as the Select Board deem advisable; to take all necessary action to comply with the General Laws of the Commonwealth for the disposal of said property, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Affordable Housing Trust

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Summary: *The Affordable Housing Trust has identified a parcel of Town owned land containing two buildable lots suitable for development of affordable housing. The purpose of this article is to allow the Affordable Housing Trust to issue a Request for Proposals to invite a response from a developer to create affordable housing on this site. More information will be shared at the Town Meeting.*

Article 18: Authorize the Lease of Town Owned Land

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to lease a portion of Town owned land located at 600 Cow Pond Brook Road and shown on Assessors Map 248 as Parcel 41, for a period of up to Thirty (30) Years, for the purpose of providing a composting facility, or to take any action relative thereto.

***Town Manager
DPW Director***

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Summary: *Several years ago, the Town entered into a lease arrangement with Black Earth to install a composting center at the DPW Facility on Cow Pond Brook Road. The facility has been successful and the operator has been working with the DPW and Board of Health to address neighborhood concerns. That said, the Town would like to advertise an RFP to solicit proposals to continue to have a composting center at this location. To encourage a long term capital investment in the facility, the Town would like to be able to offer a longer term lease for up to 30 years. Town Meeting approval is required for leases of this magnitude.*

Article 19: Special Act for PILOTs for Certain Tax-Exempt Properties

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to petition the General Court to enact special legislation to require payments in lieu of taxes from property owners exempt from taxation serving as the primary residence of students enrolled in public schools, as set forth below, and further that the General Court may make clerical or editorial changes of form only to the bill, unless the Select Board approves amendments to the bill before enactment by the General Court, which amendments shall be within the public purposes of said petition, or to take any other action relative thereto.

AN ACT RELATIVE TO PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES IN THE TOWN OF GROTON

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, a property in the town of Groton exempt from taxation under the third clause of section 5 of chapter 59 of the general laws serving as the primary residence of a student enrolled in public schools such that said student contributes to the student population used to assess the town for public education costs by regional school districts shall be subject to assessments from the town for payments in lieu of taxes as set forth in this chapter.

SECTION 2. Definitions applicable to this chapter are as follows:

Out of district tuition – the tuition amount charged by the Groton-Dunstable Regional School District for out of district students as of July 1 of each year.

Per student expenditure – The product of the total amount appropriated by the town of Groton for regional school district budgets for the fiscal year beginning on July 1 of each year divided by the total number of students enrolled in all grades from pre-kindergarten through twelve as of October 1.

Qualifying property – a property in the town of Groton exempt from taxation under the third clause of section 5 of chapter 59 of the general laws.

Resident student – a student enrolled in public schools with a primary residence on a qualifying property such that said student counts towards the student population used to assess the town of Groton for public education costs by regional school districts.

Annual assessment – The out of district tuition multiplied by the number of resident students of a qualifying property as of October 1.

Annual assessment – The per student expenditure multiplied by the number of resident students of a qualifying property as of October 1.

SECTION 3. Invoices for each annual assessment shall be sent to the owner of a qualifying property on or before October 31, with payments for such annual assessment due by January 1.

SECTION 4. Annual assessments shall be subject to all collection and abatement procedures set forth in chapter 60 of the general laws.

SECTION 5. This act shall take effect on the next succeeding October 1 following the date of its passage.

Select Board

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Summary: *This Special Act, if approved by the Massachusetts General Court, would require the two private schools located in Groton to pay the cost of educating children living on their tax exempt property that attend the Groton Dunstable Regional School District.*

Article 20: *Amend Chapter 81 "Town Meetings" of the Code of the Town of Groton*

To see if the Town will vote to amend Chapter 81 "Town Meetings" of the General Bylaws of the Town by amending Section 81-2 and 81-4(A) as follows:

§81-2 Quorum

There shall be no quorum requirement for any Special Town Meeting.

§81-4 Scheduling of Business

A. All business, other than the election of officers and the determination of such matters as by law are required to be by ballot, shall be held at first session of the Spring Town Meeting. The election of officers and other voting by ballot shall be held on the fourth Tuesday following the first session of the Spring Town Meeting, at which time the polls shall remain open at hours determined by the Select Board in consultation with the Town Manager and Town Clerk.

or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Summary: Currently, Section 81-2 of the Bylaw requires a quorum of 2% for any Special Town Meeting but has no quorum requirement at the Spring and Fall Town Meetings. The proposed amendment would eliminate the quorum requirement at Special Town Meetings and make it consistent with the Spring and Fall Town Meetings. Section 81-4 currently requires business to be held at the first session of the Town Meeting at 7:00 p.m. Removing this requirement will allow for greater flexibility in the calling of Town Meetings, including the start time. In addition, this Section requires polls to be open for the Annual Election from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. There are times when the Ballot for the Annual Election has no contested races and turn out is extremely light. Having the polls open for 13 hours in these instances is excessive. Allowing the Select Board to set the hours on an annual basis, after consulting with the Town Manager and Town Clerk, will address this issue.

Article 21: Zoning Amendment - Firearms Retail Sales Establishments

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Bylaws of the Town of Groton as follows:

1. Amend **Section 218-3 Definitions** by inserting the following in alphabetical order:

“FIREARMS RETAIL SALES ESTABLISHMENT”

A commercial business, possessing a Federal Firearms License (FFL), with established business hours, which derives its principal income from the sale and service of firearms, such as handguns and long guns, to individuals in an open shopping format. It may also provide repairs for firearms and their parts. Other firearms related or sporting equipment, such as accessories, ammunition, hunting and fishing products, food, or clothing, may be sold in the store as well. This definition shall not apply to small ‘by appointment only’ FFL licensed holders/collectors consistent with the provisions of Section 218-5.3.B Home Occupations, as permitted by Massachusetts General Laws and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives Regulations (BATFE)

2. Amend **Section 218—5.2 Schedule of Use Regulations** by inserting the following entry in the Section titled “Business” after the entry numbered 80 and renumbering subsequent entries accordingly:

	USE	R-A ¹⁰	R-B ¹⁰	NB	VCB ¹⁰	GB	I	p ¹⁰	O
“81	Firearms Retail Sales Establishment	N	N	N	N	PB	PB	N	N”

3. Amend **Section 218-10 Special Regulations** by inserting a new **Section 218-10.5 Firearms Retail Sales Establishments** to read as follows:

“218-10.5 Firearms Retail Sales Establishments

A. Purpose.

- (1) To provide reasonable regulations and standards for the placement and operation of Firearms Retail Sales Establishments in appropriate places in the Town of Groton.
- (2) To minimize the adverse impacts of Firearms Retail Sales establishments on adjacent properties, residential neighborhoods, schools, and other places where children congregate, local historic districts, and other sensitive land uses.
- (3) To regulate the siting, design, placement, security, safety, monitoring, modification, and discontinuance of Firearms Retail Sales establishments.

B. Applicability.

No Firearms Retail Sales Establishment shall be operated in the Town of Groton except in compliance with the provisions of § 218-5.2 (Schedule of Use Regulations) and this § 218-10.5 (Firearms Retail Sales Establishments).

C. General requirements and conditions for all Firearms Retail Sales Establishments.

- (1) All Firearms Retail Sales Establishments shall be located within a building or structure.
- (2) The hours of operation of Firearms Retail Sales establishments shall be set by the special permit granting authority.
- (3) No Firearms Retail Sales Establishment entrance shall be located closer than 500 feet from the entrance of a preexisting public or private preschool, school providing education in kindergarten or any grades 1 through 12, junior college, college, licensed day-care center, church, library, park, playground, or other firearms retail sales establishment. Distance shall be measured in a straight line from the geometric center of the Firearms Retail Sales Establishment's entrance door to the geometric center of the entrance door or primary public entrance location of the nearest facility listed in the previous sentence, unless there is an impassable barrier within those 500 feet that renders any part of the 500-foot straight-line distance inaccessible by a pedestrian or automobile, in which case the 500-foot distance shall be measured along the center of the shortest publicly accessible pedestrian travel path from the geometric center of the Firearms Retail Sales Establishment's entrance door to the geometric center of the entrance door or primary public entrance location of the nearest facility listed in the previous sentence.
- (4) The on-site discharge of firearms at all licensed Firearms Retail Sales Establishments is prohibited in the Town of Groton.

- (5) The maximum number of licensed Firearms Retail Sales Establishments in the Town of Groton shall not exceed three (3) such establishments.
- (6) No person under the age of 18 shall be allowed on the premises unless accompanied by a parent or legal guardian and notice of such limitation shall be posted outside the establishment.
- (7) No Firearms Retail Sales Establishment shall be located inside a building containing residential units, including transient housing such as motels and dormitories, or inside a movable or mobile structure such as a van or truck.
- (8) Firearms Retail Sales Establishments shall be located within a permanent building and may not be in a trailer, cargo container, motor vehicle or other similar nonpermanent enclosure. Firearms Retail Sales Establishments shall not have drive-through service.
- (9) No outside storage of Firearms Retail Sales, related supplies or promotional materials is permitted.
- (10) No more than one Firearms Retail Sales Establishment shall be operated from the same lot.
- (11) The special permit for a Firearms Retail Sales Establishment shall be granted to the FFL license holder rather than the owner of the property and shall not be transferrable absent an amendment to the special permit.
- (12) No display of firearms shall be visible from the building exterior.

D. Special permit requirements.

- (1) A Firearms Retail Sales Establishment shall only be allowed by special permit from the Planning Board in accordance with MGL c. 40A, § 9 and **§ 218 2.3** (Special permits) and **§ 218 5.5** (Performance standards for business and industrial special permits uses in R-B, VCB, NB, GB, and I Districts) of this chapter subject to the following statements, regulations, requirements, conditions, and limitations.
- (2) No special permit for any Firearms Retail Sales Establishment shall be issued without major site plan approval having been issued by the Planning Board, **§ 218-2.5**, Site Plan Review, of this chapter. In addition to the standards set forth within, the site plan must meet all dimensional, parking, landscaping, and signage requirements within this chapter.

- (3) A Firearms Retail Sales Establishment shall not sub-lease space from another Firearms Retail Sales Establishment in any building or establishment and is prohibited from sub-leasing space to another Firearms Retail Sales Establishment.
- (4) In addition to the application requirements set forth above, a special permit application for a Firearms Retail Sales Establishment shall include the following:
 - (a) The name and address of owner(s) of the Firearms Retail Sales Establishment licensee/applicant.
 - (b) Copies of all FFL licenses and permits issued to the applicant by the BATFE and any other agencies for the establishment.
 - (c) Evidence of the applicant's right to use the site of the establishment for the establishment, such as a purchase and sale agreement, deed, owner's authorization, or lease agreement.
 - (d) Proposed security plan with measures for the Firearms Retail Sales Establishment, including lighting, fencing, after-hours storage, security surveillance, alarms, and systems, etc., to ensure the safety of persons and to protect the premises from theft. A letter from the Town of Groton Police Chief, or designee, acknowledging review and approval of the Firearms Retail Sales Establishment security plan is required. To the extent allowed by law, all such documents shall be confidential.
 - (e) All application requirements for major site plan review as specified in § **218-2.5.D.(2)** of this chapter unless certain nonapplicable requirements are waived by the Planning Board.
- (5) Mandatory findings. The special permit authority shall not issue a special permit for a Firearms Retail Sales Establishment unless it finds that:
 - (a) The establishment is designed to minimize any adverse impacts on abutters and other parties in interest, as defined in MGL c. 40A, § 11.
 - (b) The establishment demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Planning Board that it will meet all the permitting requirements of all applicable agencies within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and will comply with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations; and
 - (c) The applicant has satisfied all the conditions and requirements set forth herein.
- (6) A special permit granted under this section shall have a term limited to the duration of the applicant's ownership of the business and licensure of the Firearms Retail Sales Establishment. Transfer of the establishment to another licensed proprietor or termination/expiration of applicant's FFL license shall render the special permit invalid. Transfer of the establishment or the reissuance of an expired FFL license shall require the approval of the special permit granting authority in the form of an amendment to the special permit with all information required.

- (7) The special permit granting authority may waive the buffer requirement set forth in Section 218-10.5.C(3) by a supermajority (2/3) vote as part of the issuance of a special permit provided that:
 - (a) The application is for a new Applicant (change of Applicant) for an existing Firearms Retail Sales Establishment; or
 - (b) The Applicant demonstrates that the Firearms Retail Sales Establishment would otherwise effectively be prohibited within the Town; or
 - (c) That the project can be conditioned to reasonably satisfy the purpose and intent of the setback requirements.

E. Abandonment or discontinuance of use.

- (1) A special permit shall lapse if the special permit holder's Federal Firearms License (FFL) is terminated or not renewed by the BATFE unless the applicant can demonstrate reissuance of an FFL is highly probable.
- (2) A Firearms Retail Sales Establishment shall be required to remove all material, equipment, and other items subject to federal and state licensing within six months of ceasing operations.

or to take any other action relative thereto.

Planning Board

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Planning Board:

Summary: *The proposed Zoning Bylaw amendment defines firearms retail sales establishments as a use category, identifies the zoning districts where such establishments are allowed, and specifies the provisions under which such establishments may be permitted.*

Article 22: Zoning Amendment – Update/Clarify Definition – Age Restricted Housing

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Bylaws of the Town of Groton as follows:

- 4. Amend **Section 218-3 Definitions** by amending the following definition that reads as follows:

“AGE-RESTRICTED HOUSING

Housing in which 50% of the dwelling units are subsidized under any program or plan that will result in the development of low- or moderate-income housing, such housing which the Groton Housing Authority certifies carries restrictions to limit the eligibility of the occupants and sale price, if applicable to within guidelines as defined in applicable federal or state statute, whether built or operated by any public agency or any nonprofit or limited dividend organization with occupancy reserved to persons 55 years of age or older.”

So that it reads as follows:

“AGE-RESTRICTED HOUSING

Housing in which 50% of the dwelling units are subsidized under any program or plan that will result in the development of low- or moderate-income housing, such subsidized housing which qualifies for inclusion on the Subsidized Housing Inventory of the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities and is in compliance with the provisions and regulations of the U.S. Fair Housing Act 42 USC 3601 and the Act’s Housing for Older Persons exemption provisions for persons over 55 years of age or older.”

or to take any other action relative thereto.

Planning Board

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Planning Board:

Summary: *The purpose of this article is to update the definition of Age-Restricted Housing in the Zoning Bylaw to be consistent with the state’s affordable housing policy and to be compliant with federal fair housing regulations.*

Article 23: Zoning Amendment – Solar Parking Canopies

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Bylaws of the Town of Groton as follows:

- 4. Amend **Section 218-3 Definitions** by inserting the following definition in alphabetical order:

“SOLAR PARKING CANOPY” — A roof application of a solar photovoltaic array that is installed on top of a supporting structure built on a functional and striped parking surface so as to maintain the function of the area beneath the canopy (also known as "solar carports.")

- Amend **Section 218—5.2 Schedule of Use Regulations** by inserting the following entry in the Section titled “Business Accessory (use)” after the entry numbered 108 and renumbering subsequent entries accordingly:

	USE	R-A ¹⁰	R-B ¹⁰	NB	VCB ¹⁰	GB	I	P ¹⁰	O
“80	Solar Parking Canopy	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y”

- Amend **Section 218-5.3 Accessory Uses** by inserting a new **Section 218-5.3.E. Solar Parking Canopy** to read as follows:

“Section 218-5.3.E. Solar Parking Canopies

(1) Solar Parking Canopies in the R-A District shall meet setback requirements for Accessory Structures.

(2) Solar Parking Canopies and Surface-integrated Solar Energy Systems in non-R-A Districts shall be allowed where parking is permitted in accordance with the requirements defined in Section 218-8.1, Off-Street Parking and Loading. The requirements for the planting of trees in landscaped strips within the parking area as defined in Section 218-8.1.C.(7) Parking Lot Planting may be met elsewhere on the lot. Landscaping for parking lots located under a canopy shall be designed to manage runoff from the panels and to be shade tolerant.

(3) Solar Parking Canopies in the no R-A District shall be subject to Section 218-2.5 Site Plan Review.

(4) Solar Parking Canopies shall not exceed seventeen (17) feet in height from grade.”

- Amend **Section 218-2.5 Site Plan Review** by inserting the following entry under Section 518-2.5.C.(2) Threshold of Review / Major to read as follows:

“(e) Solar Parking Canopy”

or to take any other action relative thereto.

Planning Board

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Planning Board:

Summary: *The purpose of this Zoning Bylaw amendment is to allow for the installation of solar parking canopies in areas where off-street parking is provided.*

Article 24: Zoning Amendment – Accessory Dwelling Units

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Bylaw of the Town of Groton as follows:

- 1. Amend Section 218-3 Definitions by deleting the definition for Accessory Apartment in its entirety and replace it with the following definition**

“Accessory Dwelling Unit

A self-contained housing unit, inclusive of sleeping, cooking and sanitary facilities on the same lot as a principal dwelling, subject to otherwise applicable dimensional and parking requirements, that: (i) maintains a separate entrance, either directly from the outside or through an entry hall or corridor shared with the principal dwelling sufficient to meet the requirements of the state building code for safe egress; (ii) is not larger in gross floor area than 1/2 the gross floor area of the principal dwelling or 900 square feet, whichever is smaller; and (iii) is subject to such additional restrictions as may be imposed by a municipality, including, but not limited to, additional size restrictions and restrictions or prohibitions on short-term rental, as defined in section 1 of chapter 64G; provided, however, this bylaw shall not unreasonably restrict the creation or rental of an accessory dwelling unit that is not a short-term rental.”

- 2. Amend Section 218-5.2 Schedule of Use Regulations** by deleting the entry under Accessory Uses “Accessory A apartment as regulated under Section 218-9.4” in its entirety and replace it with the following entry

	R-A	R-B	NB	VCB	GB	I	P	O
“Accessory Dwelling Unit	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N”

- 3. Amend Section 9.4 Accessory Apartment** by deleting it in its entirety and replace it with the following:

§ 218-9.4. Accessory Dwelling Unit.

§ 218-9.4.1. Purpose.

- To provide homeowners of a single-family dwelling in the R-A and R-B Districts with a means of sharing space and the burdens of home ownership, companionship, security, and services, thereby enabling them to stay more comfortably in homes and neighborhoods they might otherwise be forced to leave.
- Develop housing units in single-family neighborhoods that are appropriate for households at a variety of stages in their life cycle.
- Provide small additional housing units for rent without substantially altering the appearance of the Town.

- d. Provide housing units for persons with disabilities.
- e. Protect stability, property values, and the residential character of a neighborhood.

§ 218-9.4.2. Attached accessory dwelling unit.

Use or rental of an accessory dwelling unit, an independent dwelling unit not to exceed 900 square feet of habitable floor area or 50% of the gross habitable floor area contained within the principal dwelling unit, whichever is less. The unit shall have a separate entrance, a kitchen/living room, a bathroom and bedrooms. The gross floor area shall include the interior finished habitable area to be used exclusively for the accessory dwelling unit.

No more than one accessory dwelling unit shall be allowed by right on a lot in the RA and RB Districts providing the following criteria are met:

- a. The accessory dwelling unit shall conform to the provisions of Title V of the State Sanitary Code, 310 CMR 15.00, and applicable regulations of the Groton Board of Health or be served by public sewer.
- b. Approval from the Fire Department.
- c. Building, plumbing, electrical and any other required permits are obtained.
- d. The attached accessory dwelling unit is contained within a single-family dwelling.
- e. All staircases required to access an attached accessory dwelling unit must not change the general appearance of a single-family house.
- f. Space for the attached accessory dwelling unit may be provided by either raising the roof, or extending the dwelling, but only in accordance with current height and setback requirements.
- g. To maintain the single-family character of the neighborhood, the entrance to the attached accessory dwelling unit should be on the side or rear, if possible, but may be through the front door, if there is a vestibule.
- h. The accessory dwelling unit and the principal dwelling to which it is accessory shall remain under the same ownership.
- i. Sufficient and appropriate area for at least one additional parking space shall be provided by the owner to serve the accessory dwelling unit. Said parking space shall be constructed of materials consistent with the existing driveway and, to prevent on-street parking, and shall have vehicular access to the driveway.

- j. The footprint of the structure in which the attached accessory dwelling unit is to be located shall not be increased by more than 900 square feet or 50% of the habitable gross floor area of the existing principal dwelling, whichever is less, and shall retain the appearance of a single- family structure. Any such increase in the footprint shall not exacerbate an existing nonconformity nor create a new nonconformity.
- k. The provisions of MGL c. 40A, § 3 shall apply to any accessory dwelling units intended for occupancy by a person with a disability relative to access ramps used solely for the purpose of facilitation ingress and egress to person with physical limitations as defined in MGL c. 22, § 13A.

§ 218-9.4.3. Detached accessory dwelling unit.

The Planning Board may authorize the installation and use and rental of a detached accessory dwelling unit not to exceed 900 square feet of habitable floor area or 50% of the gross habitable floor area contained within the principal dwelling unit, whichever is less.in a detached structure on a lot in the R-A or R-B Districts subject to Site Plan Review pursuant to § 218-2.5 provided the following criteria are met:

- a. Sections a-c, e, h, i, and k of § 218-9.4.2 are met.
- b. A plot plan of the existing dwelling unit and proposed accessory dwelling unit shall be submitted , showing the location of the building on the lot, the proposed accessory dwelling unit, location of any septic system and required parking.
- c. The detached accessory dwelling unit shall be a complete, separate housekeeping unit containing a kitchen/living room, a bathroom and bedrooms. No more than one accessory dwelling unit shall be allowed by right on a lot in the RA and RB District.
- d. Any new construction shall be in accordance with current height and setback requirements for the district in which it is located.
- e. No building permit shall be granted without a condition that the accessory dwelling unit shall conform to the provisions of Title V of the State Sanitary Code, 310 CMR 15.00, and applicable regulations of the Groton Board of Health.
- f. Any property that has been granted a building permit for a detached accessory dwelling unit shall not be further divided unless all zoning requirements can be met for the district in which it is located.
- g. Prior to approval under Site Plan Review a for a detached accessory dwelling unit the Planning Board shall make the following findings:

- (1) The detached accessory dwelling unit will not impair the integrity or character of the neighborhood in which it is located.
- (2) The detached accessory dwelling unit will provide housing opportunities in conformance with the purpose of this section.

4. Amend Section 218-2.5 Site Plan Review by adding the following at the end of Section B.(2) Applicability

“(d) Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit (refer to Section 218-9.5)”

or to take any other action relative thereto.

Planning Board

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Planning Board:

Summary: *This article amends the Zoning Bylaw to conform with newly adopted changes to the Massachusetts Zoning Act relative to Accessory Dwelling Units while retaining much of the local regulatory framework. The major regulatory requirements include:*

- *The term Accessory Dwelling Units replaces the nomenclature for Accessory Apartments and the definition tracks definition from the State legislation*
- *An occupancy requirement of either the Accessory or Principal unit by the property owner is no longer permitted under the State legislation.*
- *Accessory unit size is limited to 900 square feet or 50% of the gross habitable floor area of the principal unit, whichever is smaller. Current zoning limits size to 800 square feet.*
- *No more than one accessory unit is to be allowed as of right on a lot , however the proposed zoning ame*
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-
- *ndment does require detached accessory units to be subject to site plan review by the Planning Board. The current zoning allowed attached units as of right and detached by special permit. Special permits are no longer permitted unless more than one accessory dwelling is contemplated. This bylaw does not contain provisions for more than one accessory dwelling unit per lot in a single family district.*
- *The bylaw leaves many of the dimensional, bulk, parking, and site requirements consistent with the State legislation.*
- *The proposed zoning requires the principal and accessory dwelling unit be under the same ownership.*

Article 25: Amend Chapter 198 Stormwater Management – Low Impact Development

To see if Town will vote to amend the Code of the Town of Groton by deleting Chapter 198, “Stormwater Management – Low Impact Development,” in its entirety and replacing it with a new Chapter 198, “Stormwater Management – Low Impact Development” as on file in the Office of the Town Clerk, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Earth Removal Stormwater Advisory Committee

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: *The Committee is proposing an amendment to the Stormwater Management By-law to update the by-law so that it is consistent with the new Massachusetts Stormwater Handbook and Regulations.*

Article 26: Accept Monarch Path as a Town Way

To see if the Town will vote to accept Monarch Path as a public way, as recommended by the Planning Board and laid out by the Select Board and as shown on a plan entitled “Right-of-Way As-Built of Monarch Path, Groton, Massachusetts, Owned by Ebrahim Masalehdan”, prepared by TFM Civil Engineers, Bedford, NH for Ebrahim Masalehdan, dated May 2, 2022, and on file with the Town Clerk; to authorize the Select Board to acquire, by gift, purchase or eminent domain such land and easements for the creation, maintenance and operation of a public way, including but not limited to easements for access, grading, drainage, sloping, construction and utilities, in all or any portions of such way and the parcels on such way, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Select Board

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: *To accept Monarch Path as a public way.*

Article 27: Citizens’ Petition – Reduce Statutory Speed Limit from 30 MPH to 25 MPH

To see if the Town will vote to amend Groton Traffic Rules and Orders, Article XI Speed Regulations, Town of Groton Speed Limits, by adopting MGL, c. 90, §17C Sections 193 of Chapter 218 of the Acts of 2016. Mass.gov: “Section 193 allows a municipality to opt-in to Section 17C of Chapter 90 of the MGL, thereby reducing the statutory speed limit from 30 mph to 25 mph on any or all city or town-owned roadways within a thickly settled or business district. The legislation also requires cities and towns to notify MassDOT of these changes,” or to take any other action relative thereto.

Citizens’ Petition

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>
James A. Barisano	15 Longley Road	Paul Barstow	283 Old Dunstable Road
Lynne Burmeister	37 Throne Hill Road	Jeff Gordon	161 Main Street
Sadie Guichard	15 Whiting Ave	Lisa Murray	85 Wharton Row
Karen Tucker-Barisano	15 Longley Road	David Butz	532 Longley Road
Paul F. Murray, Jr.	85 Wharton Row	Greg Sheldon	62 Whispering Brook Road

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Summary: The following summary was prepared by the petitioners and represents their view on the Article: *Groton has approximately 110 miles of roads and no sidewalks or bike lanes on 80% of them. Vehicles traveling on Groton’s roads routinely exceed the posted speed limits by five to ten miles per hour. At the Groton Master Plan Public Session held at the Groton Center, the Barrett Planning Group revealed that the risk of death to a pedestrian hit by a vehicle is 18% at 20 miles per hour, 50% at 30 miles per hour and 88% at 40 miles per hour. Risks vary significantly by age. This is commonsense solution, which has been adopted by eighty-one Massachusetts cities and towns, including towns adjacent to Groton. It will help reduce the risk of injury and death to those walking, jogging and on bicycles. This is a multi-step process. If approved by Town Meeting, the Select Board will appoint a committee to conduct a traffic study in cooperation with the MassDOT. Currently posted speed regulations on streets within business and thickly settled districts will each be evaluated. When all steps in the process are complete and approval has been granted by the MassDOT, the Town will remove all speed restriction signs applicable to the previous speed limit and begins enforcement of the 25 MPH speed limit. All citizens of Groton are urged to support this pedestrian safety initiative.*

Hereof fail not and make return of your doings to the Town Clerk on or before time of said meeting.

Given under our hands this 16th Day of September in the year of our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Four.

Alison S. Manugian

Alison S. Manugian, Chair

Rebecca H. Pine

Rebecca H. Pine, Vice Chair

Peter S. Cunningham

Peter S. Cunningham, Clerk

John F. Reilly

John F. Reilly, Member

Matthew F. Pisani

Matthew F. Pisani, Member

**OFFICERS RETURN
Groton, Middlesex**

Pursuant to the within Warrant, I have this day notified the Inhabitants to assemble at the time, place, and for the purpose mentioned as within directed. Personally posted by Constable.

Constable

Date Duly Posted

**REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER
TO THE 2024 FALL TOWN MEETING**

Town of Groton
Select Board
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Groton, MA 01450

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