



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, MARCH 24, 2025
AGENDA
SELECT BOARD MEETING ROOM
2nd FLOOR
GROTON TOWN HALL

- 6:00 P.M. Announcements and Review Agenda for the Public
- 6:01 P.M. Public Comment Period
- I. 6:05 P.M. Town Manager's Report
1. Consider Ratifying the Agreement between the Town of Groton and SEIU 888, Highway/Water/Transfer Station Employees
 2. Consider Ratifying the Agreement between the Town of Groton and AFSCME Council 93 Local 1703 – Groton Supervisor's Union
 3. Update on Fiscal Year 2026 Budget
 4. Update on Select Board's Meeting Schedule through the 2025 Spring Town Meeting
- II. 6:10 P.M. Items for Select Board Consideration and Action
1. Determine Whether or Not to Combine the Two Override Questions (One for School and One for the Fire Department) on the May 20, 2025 Election Ballot into One Question or Keep Them Separated
 2. Consider Opting Into In Person Early Voting for the May 20, 2025 Annual Town Election
 3. Consider Taking Positions on Some/All of the Warrant Articles Contained in the 2025 Spring Town Meeting Warrant
 4. Consider Appointing Veronica O'Donnell to the Sustainability Commission.
 5. Consider Disbanding the Commemorations and Celebrations Committee
- III. 6:15 P.M. Discussion – UMass Memorial Health's Plan to Build a Satellite Emergency Facility in Groton

OTHER BUSINESS

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

- A. PFAS Issue
- B. Nashoba Valley Medical Center Working Group
- C. Charter Review Committee
- D. PILOTS

SELECT BOARD LIAISON REPORTS

- IV. Minutes: Regularly Scheduled Meeting of March 3, 2025
 Regularly Scheduled Meeting of March 10, 2025

ADJOURNMENT

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



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Town Manager
Mark W. Haddad

To: *Select Board*

From: *Mark W. Haddad – Town Manager*

Subject: *Weekly Agenda Update/Report*

Date: *March 24, 2025*

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

In addition to the Town Manager's Report, Items for Select Board Consideration and Action and a review of the On-going Issue List, there is one item scheduled on Monday's Agenda. Time has been set aside on the Agenda for the Select Board to discuss/review UMass Memorial Health's plan to construct a Satellite Emergency Facility in Groton. Enclosed with this Report is a letter from UMass Memorial Health announcing their plans.

Under Announcements, I would respectfully request the opportunity to announce some events we have planned around the Budget. Enclosed with this Report is a Press Release I would like to release at Monday's Meeting announcing a "Coffee and Conversation" event on April 3, 2025 at the Groton Inn and a Pre-School Family "Meet and Greet" on the same day at the Groton Public Library. In addition, there is a planned Community Budget Forum on April 16, 2025 at 7:00 p.m., at the Groton Dunstable Regional High School.

1. Enclosed with this Report is the Tentative Agreement reached between the Town and SEIU 888, Highway/Water/Transfer Station Employees. The Agreement has been ratified by the Union. I would respectfully request that the Board consider ratifying the Agreement at Monday's meeting.
2. Enclosed with this Report is the Tentative Agreement reached between the Town and AFSCME Council 93, Local 1703 – Groton Supervisor's Union. The Agreement has been ratified by the Union. I would respectfully request that the Board consider ratifying the Agreement at Monday's meeting.
3. With regard to the FY 2026 Budget, the Finance Committee has approved the proposed Balanced Budget in the amount of \$52,448,239. In addition, they voted to present a Contingent Budget to the Town Meeting for an additional \$673,250 for the Groton Dunstable Regional School District Assessment and \$630,904 to add six (6) Firefighter/EMTs to the Groton Fire Department. The Finance Committee also requested that I prepare a three-year projection based on these Contingent Budgets. Also enclosed with this Report is a memo I prepared outlining the three-year projection. I would like to take a few minutes at Monday's meeting reviewing this with the Board.

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2. Please see the update to the Select Board's Schedule through the 2025 Spring Town Meeting:

Wednesday, March 26, 2025 -	-Joint Meeting with Town Moderator and Groton Contingent of the GDRSD Committee to consider reappointing Rob Flynn and John Ellenberger to the Nashoba Tech School Committee (Meeting to be held at the PAC at 7:00 p.m.)
Monday, March 31, 2025 -	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, April 7, 2025 -	-Issue the Warrant for the 2025 Spring Town Meeting
Monday, April 14, 2025 -	-Public Hearing – Consider Adopting Layout of Monarch Path
Monday, April 21, 2025 - Saturday, April 26, 2025	No Meeting – Patriot's Day Holiday Spring Town Meeting

ITEMS FOR SELECT BOARD CONSIDERATION AND ACTION

1. Based on the vote of the Select Board at last Tuesday's meeting, I am providing to you with the Proposed Override Ballot Questions to be added to the May 20, 2025 Annual Town Election Ballot. The specific vote by the Board was to have one question for the School District Assessment and one question to add six (6) Firefighter/EMTs to the Fire Department. The Board was deadlocked on combining the two issues into one Question. For now, the two approved questions are as follows:

QUESTION 1: Shall the Town of Groton be allowed to assess an additional \$673,250 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purpose of funding the Assessment of the Groton Dunstable Regional School District for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025?

Yes___ No ___

QUESTION 2: Shall the Town of Groton be allowed to assess an additional \$780,904 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purpose of funding six (6) additional Firefighter/EMTs for the Groton Fire Department for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025?

Yes___ No ___

Continued on the Next Page – Over >

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1. **Continued:**

Should the Board decide to combine the questions at Monday's Meeting, the Question will be as follows:

QUESTION 1: Shall the Town of Groton be allowed to assess an additional \$1,454,154 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purpose of funding the Assessment of the Groton Dunstable Regional School District and funding six (6) additional Firefighter/EMTs for the Groton Fire Department for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025?

Yes ___ No ___

We can discuss this in more detail at Monday's meeting.

2. Please be advised that the Board of Registrars, at their posted meeting on March 12, 2025, voted unanimously to recommend that the Select Board vote to opt into In Person Early Voting for the May 20, 2025 Town Election. Should the Select Board agree, you will need to vote to opt into In Person Early Voting for the May 20, 2025 Town Election and vote to include the following hours during the early voting Period:

Sat, May 10:	9am-3pm
Mon, May 12:	8am-7pm
Tues, May 13:	8am-4pm
Wed, May 14:	8am-4pm
Thurs, May 15:	8am-4pm
Fri, May 16:	8am-1pm

Town Clerk Dawn Dunbar will be in attendance at Monday's meeting to answer any questions the Board may have with regard to this issue.

3. Enclosed with this Report is the latest draft of the 2025 Spring Town Meeting Warrant. It has been updated to remove three Articles as follows: Citizens' Petition (awaiting signatures from the Ten petitioners), Funding for the Sustainability Commission and Current Year Line Item Transfers. This leaves us with 29 Articles. I am waiting for feedback from the Planning Board and Historical Commission on Town Counsel's proposed edits to their articles. I will update them when I receive them. I have also added the Finance Committee Recommendations and the two ballot questions, along with Appendix A (Budget and Contingent Budget) for your review. Appendices B, C and D will be added in the next couple of weeks. I still have to draft the Town Manager's and Finance Committee's Budget Report. I will do that next week. I would respectfully request that the Select Board consider taking positions on the various Articles at Monday's meeting.
4. The Sustainability Commission has requested that the Board appoint Vernoica O'Donnell to the Sustainability Commission. I would respectfully request that the Board consider making this appointment at Monday's meeting.

Select Board
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4. The Commemorations and Celebration Committee has requested that they be disbanded. As you know, the main purpose of this Committee was to plan for various Town wide events, including the Memorial Day Parade, Veteran's Day Memorial and the 250th Birthday of the United States. Many of their plans, if discussed in public, could cause confusion if certain plans/events/locations do not come to fruition. To that end, instead of having a Committee that needs to post Agendas, take minutes, etc. to comply with the Open Meeting Law, the Committee believes that it would make more sense to have them as a Town Manager's Working Group where I can work with and coordinate efforts in the planning of these events. I would respectfully request that the Select board vote to disband the Committee at Monday's meeting. Should the Board take this action, I will immediately form a Working Group. We can discuss this in more detail at Monday's meeting.

MWH/rjb
enclosures



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PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 24, 2024

In the Town's on-going effort to provide information to the public and answer questions concerning the Budget and the overall Town and School District Operations, the Select Board, Groton Dunstable Regional School District Committee and Groton Town Manager are scheduling various events to meet with the Public. On April 3, 2025 at 9:00 a.m., there will be a "Coffee and Conversation" event at the Groton Inn. Town Manager Mark Haddad will be joined by Select Board Member John Reilly, School Superintendent Geoff Bruno and Groton Dunstable Regional School Committee Chair Lacey McCabe to discuss the Proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Budget and answer questions on any issues members of the public have with regard to the School and Town. Also on April 3rd at 10:30 a.m., the same group will meet with parents with young children (3 to 5 years of age) and introduce them to the School District and discuss the budget as well.

On April 16, 2025 at 7:00 p.m., a Community Budget Forum will be held at the Groton Dunstable Regional High School. At this Forum, representatives from the Groton Select Board, Groton Finance Committee, Groton Dunstable Regional School Committee, Dunstable Select Board, Dunstable Advisory Committee, along with the Dunstable Town Administrator and Groton Town Manager will present the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget and be available to answer questions.

The Select Board, Town Manager and Groton Dunstable Regional School District Committee urge residents to attend one, if not all, of these events.

Mark W. Haddad
Town Manager



COMMUNITY OUTREACH DAY

Thursday, April 3rd, 2025

Join us for a two part day!

Coffee and Conversation with:

- Groton Town Manager, Mark Haddad
- GDRSD Superintendent, Dr. Geoff Bruno
- Groton Selectboard Members
- GD School Committee Members



The Groton Inn
128 Main Street, Groton MA

9:00-10:00am

Get to know your town officials, ask questions, and hear more about what's happening in our town and in our schools!

Preschool Family Meet and Greet:

Groton Public Library
99 Main Street, Groton MA

10:30-11:30am

Calling all Preschool families! Join us for a chance to meet the Superintendent and GD School Committee. Ask questions and learn more about GDRSD.



Kids can participate in a story time reading during this event to ensure parents/guardians are able to participate!

Questions?

Please call 878-448-5505 or email lmccabe@gdrsd.org



GROTON & DUNSTABLE

COMMUNITY BUDGET FORUM

WEDNESDAY,
APRIL 16TH, 2025

Join us on Wednesday, April 16th to discuss the district budget, ask questions, and share your feedback - we want to hear from you!

This will be an informational night with:

- GD School Committee
- Groton and Dunstable Selectboards
- Groton FinCom
- Dunstable Advisory Board
- Groton Town Manager
- Dunstable Town Administrator

7:00PM

GROTON-DUNSTABLE
REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

703 CHICOPEE ROW,
GROTON MA

Questions? Please call 978-448-5505
or email Lmccabe@gdrsd.org



March 20, 2025

Via Email

Re: Notice of Proposed Satellite Emergency Facility

To whom it may concern:

On March 20, 2025, UMass Memorial Health submitted an application for a Satellite Emergency Facility (SEF) to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH). The SEF is being requested to address the need for emergency services in the Nashoba Region following the closure of Nashoba Valley Medical Center last year. A copy of the application is enclosed.

UMass Memorial Health, through UMass Memorial HealthAlliance-Clinton Hospital, is requesting approval to build a new SEF to be located at 490 Main Street in Groton, Massachusetts. Pending approval by DPH, the plan is to have the proposed SEF constructed and operational by the end of 2026. The SEF will provide the region with access to emergency physicians and clinicians 24 hours per day, seven days per week. In addition to qualified emergency staff, the SEF will offer on-site radiology, imaging, and laboratory services. The SEF will have ambulance bays to accept patients brought to the SEF by ambulance. UMMH will also contract with Coastal Ambulance to ensure transport vehicles will be available to transport patients from the Nashoba SEF either via BLS or ALS transport services, as appropriate to the patient's acuity. In addition, the SEF will have a helicopter pad which will allow direct access for UMMH's Lifeflight, and the Boston MedFlight programs.

Through this application, UMass Memorial Health seeks to provide high-quality emergency services in a region currently lacking adequate access. In turn, the SEF will alleviate current capacity constraints facing the region's emergency departments in the wake of Nashoba's closure. Currently, the closest emergency departments from the proposed SEF are UMass Memorial HealthAlliance – Clinton Hospital, Leominster Campus (17.7 miles/~30 minutes non-peak driving time), Emerson Hospital (19.8 miles/~32 minutes non-peak driving time), and Lawrence General Hospital (31 miles/~39 minutes non-peak driving time).

Please feel free to reach out to Tricia Pistone, Senior Director of External Affairs at UMass Memorial HealthAlliance – Clinton Hospital, with any questions you have regarding this notice. She may be reached at 978-466-4094 or ppistone@healthalliance.com. UMass Memorial Health will also host a public meeting and will provide you with details once scheduled.

We look forward to working with you in the coming months and years to ensure the safety of our community.

HUSCH BLACKWELL

Rebecca Rodman
Senior Counsel

One Congress Street, Suite 3102
Boston, MA 02114
Direct: 617.279.8990
Fax: 617.598.6790
Rebecca.Rodman@huschblackwell.com

March 20, 2025

Via Email

Stephen Davis, Director
Division of Health Care Facility Licensure and Certification
Massachusetts Department of Public Health
67 Forest Street
Marlborough, MA 01752

Re: North Central MA Satellite Emergency Facility

Dear Mr. Davis:

On behalf of UMass Memorial HealthAlliance-Clinton Hospital (the "Hospital"), we write seeking approval to establish a Satellite Emergency Facility (the "SEF") to be located at 490 Main Street, Groton, MA. The following application is submitted to the Department of Public Health (DPH) in compliance with the regulation at 105 CMR 130.822 (the "Regulation"). Following this application, the Hospital will work with DPH to prepare and submit a Request for Survey application in advance of licensing and opening the SEF.

Scope of Services

As noted above, the SEF will be located at 490 Main Street, Groton, MA and will be operated by UMass Memorial HealthAlliance-Clinton Hospital. The SEF is being proposed in light of the recent closure of Nashoba Valley Medical Center and the loss of emergency medical services in the Nashoba region. Through this application for licensure of the SEF, the Hospital seeks to provide much needed emergency services in the region.

We anticipate that construction will be completed by October 2026 and the SEF will be ready for a survey mid-November 2026.

Staffing

The SEF will be staffed at all times with physicians and other healthcare providers who have the requisite qualifications and certifications under applicable state regulations and in compliance with the Regulation. As with other UMass Memorial Health (UMMH) emergency departments, the SEF will be staffed by UMass Memorial Medical Group (UMMMG) physicians, physicians' assistants and nurses. UMMMG will hire additional staff in anticipation of the SEF's opening. UMMMG emergency staff will rotate through the SEF and other UMMMH emergency departments. This rotation will ensure that SEF physicians, nurses including nurse practitioners,

HUSCH BLACKWELL

Stephen Davis, Director
Division of Health Care Facility Licensure and Certification
Massachusetts Department of Public Health
March 20, 2025
Page 2

and physician assistants meet the regulatory requirement that at least 25% of their total working hours take place in a full-service hospital-based emergency department.

Ancillary Services

The SEF will provide basic diagnostic radiology, basic laboratory testing, blood gas analysis and routine hematology and chemistry, CT and ultrasound, and plain film radiography 24 hours per day in compliance with the Regulations. The SEF will seek DoN approval for the acquisition and provision of CT services as soon as practicable.

Clinical Services

The SEF will staff sufficient beds to meet projected patient volume and will, at all times, have available pediatric and adult code carts and other standard and specialty equipment to be described in the SEF's policies and procedures. UMMH anticipates the SEF will have 11 emergency department bays with full monitoring capabilities (both invasive and non-invasive monitoring with critical care level monitoring capabilities). Additionally, UMMH anticipates four (4) observation rooms which will have monitoring capabilities similar to those on an acute care floor which will at least include telemetry monitoring, non-invasive blood pressure monitoring, and oxygen saturation monitoring.

Surgical and other emergency consultative services will be available through UMMMGM, and as appropriate, patients will be transported to the nearest clinically appropriate hospital, primarily within the UMass Memorial system and if appropriate, to other surrounding hospitals.

Ambulance Transportation

The SEF will have ambulance bays to accept patients brought to the SEF by ambulance. UMMH will also contract with Coastal Ambulance to ensure transport vehicles will be available to transport patients from the Nashoba SEF either via BLS or ALS transport services, as appropriate to the patient's acuity. In addition, the SEF will have a helicopter pad which will allow direct access for UMMH's Lifeflight, and the Boston MedFlight programs. The SEF will maintain written policies that ensure that all transfers from the SEF are carried out in accordance with all applicable state and federal laws and the Massachusetts Statewide Interfacility Transfer Guidelines as well as a written list of the medical conditions and problems that are appropriate and inappropriate for ambulance transport to the SEF based on the capability of the SEF and regional point of entry plans.

Quality Assurance

UMMH will create SEF-specific quality assurance screens that will, at a minimum, include those reviews required by the Regulation, including Continuous Quality Improvement processes that are evaluated at the main campus of the hospital, as appropriate will also be evaluated at the SEF.

HUSCH BLACKWELL

Stephen Davis, Director
Division of Health Care Facility Licensure and Certification
Massachusetts Department of Public Health
March 20, 2025
Page 3

Public Notice

UMMH will provide notice of this application to affected parties within the Hospital's service area and will hold a public meeting in the service area to describe the services to be provided at the SEF and to provide an opportunity for interested parties to present their comments on the application. In addition to engaging in the required public education activities, UMMH will endeavor to maintain close communication and collaboration with local municipalities to ensure the SEF meets the needs of the community in the best and most appropriate way possible.

As always, we appreciate your assistance with this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me or Kasey Ciolfi, Esq., if you have any questions or require any additional information.

Sincerely,

HUSCH BLACKWELL LLP



Rebecca Rodman

cc: Walter Mackie, DPH
Jaclyn Gagne, DPH
Beth McLaughlin, DPH
Torey McNamara, DPH

Warrant, Summary, and Recommendations

TOWN OF GROTON



2025 SPRING TOWN MEETING

Groton-Dunstable Regional High School Gymnasium
703 Chicopee Row, Groton, Massachusetts 01450

Beginning Saturday, April 26, 2025 @ 9:00 AM

Attention – Voters and Taxpayers

Please bring this Report to Town Meeting

*THE BUDGET HANDOUT FOR ARTICLE 5 IS AVAILABLE
IN THE BACK OF THE WARRANT*

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 that 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. Please see page 3 of this Warrant for a full explanation of how Electronic Voting will work at Town Meeting.

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 Regional High School. There is a ramp providing access from the parking lot to the front door of the High School.

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

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 in the main lobby of the High School.

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.

SPRING TOWN MEETING WARRANT APRIL 26, 2025

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 Regional High School Gymnasium in said Town on Saturday, the twenty-sixth day of April, 2025 at Nine O'clock in the morning, to consider all business other than the election of Town Officers and on the twentieth day of May, 2025, between the hours of 7:00 A.M. and 8:00 P.M., at an adjourned session thereof at the following locations:

Precinct 1	The Groton Center 163 West Main Street	Precincts 2 & 3 Marion Stoddart Bldg. Gymnasium 344 Main Street
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to give their ballots for:

Vote for One	Board of Assessors	3 Years
Vote for One	Board of Health	3 Years
Vote for Two	Select Board	3 Years
Vote for One	Commissioner of Trust Funds	3 Years
Vote for Two	Groton-Dunstable Regional School Committee	3 Years
Vote for One	Groton Electric Light Commission	3 Years
Vote for Two	Park Commission	3 Years
Vote for Two	Planning Board	3 Years
Vote for One	Planning Board	2 Years
Vote for One	Sewer Commission	3 Years
Vote for One	Sewer Commission	1 Year
Vote for Two	Trustees of the Groton Public Library	3 Years
Vote for One	Trustee of the Groton Public Library	1 Year
Vote for One	Water Commission	3 Years
Vote for One	Groton Housing Authority	5 Years
Vote for One	Groton Housing Authority	3 Years

QUESTION 1: Shall the Town of Groton be allowed to assess an additional \$673,250 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purpose of funding the Assessment of the Groton Dunstable Regional School District for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025?

Yes ___ No ___

QUESTION 2: Shall the Town of Groton be allowed to assess an additional \$780,904 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purpose of funding six (6) additional Firefighter/EMTs for the Groton Fire Department for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025?

Yes ___ No ___

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*Will be presented as one Consent Motion

**CPA Funding Recommendations will be presented as One Consent Motion

***Annual Consent Agenda. To be presented as one Motion

Article 1: Hear Reports

To see if the Town will vote to hear and act on the report of the Select Board and other Town Officers and Committees, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Select Board

Select Board:

Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Summary: *To hear reports of Town Boards, Committees and Commissions and to accept the annual report and other reports that may be presented to Town Meeting.*

Article 2: Elected Officials Compensation

To see if the Town will vote to set the compensation for the elected officials of the Town for the ensuing year, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Select Board:

Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Summary: *To provide compensation for elected officials as proposed by the Town Manager. The Town Moderator is proposed to receive a salary of \$1,000 in FY 2026.*

Article 3: Wage and Classification Schedule

To see if the Town will vote to amend and adopt for Fiscal Year 2026 the Town of Groton Wage and Classification schedule as shown in Appendix B of this Warrant, or to take any other action relative thereto.

**Select Board
Town Manager**

Select Board:

Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Summary: *The purpose of this Article is to set the wage and classification schedule for the three (3) employees (Executive Assistant to the Town Manager, Human Resources Director and IT Director) covered by the Personnel Bylaw. Under the policy of the Select Board, these employees receive the same benefits as contained in the Town Supervisors' Union Contract. These employees will receive a three (3%) percent cost-of-living adjustment in Fiscal Year 2026.*

Article 4: Appropriate FY 2026 Contribution to the OPEB Trust 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 expended by the Town Manager, to be added to the Other Post-Employment Benefits Liability Trust Fund as authorized by Chapter 32B, Section 20, of the Massachusetts General Laws, or to take any other action relative thereto.

**Select Board
Town Manager**

Select Board:

Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Summary: *The purpose of this article is to fund the Town's OPEB Liability. The Select Board and Finance Committee have adopted a funding policy for this purpose. One of the funding goals is to commit to an annual appropriation to the Trust that would keep the Net Present Value Liability from growing until such time as the Town can begin to pay down the liability. In Fiscal Year 2026, the anticipated amount necessary for this purpose is estimated to be \$200,000. This Article will seek an appropriation of \$200,000 from Free Cash to add to the OPEB Liability Trust Fund.*

Article 5: Fiscal Year 2026 Annual Operating Budget

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 as may be necessary to defray the expenses of the Town for the next Fiscal Year (2026), and act upon the budget of the Finance Committee, or to take any other action relative thereto.

**Finance Committee
Select Board
Town Manager**

Select Board:

Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously (Balanced Budget)-See Report for Override Information

Summary: *In accordance with Section 6 of the Town Charter, the Finance Committee conducts its annual budget process by receiving the Town Manager's proposed balanced budget on or before January 31st; meeting with department heads and boards; holding public budget hearings in preparation for issuing its recommendations to Town Meeting; and presenting its budget recommendations at the Spring Town Meeting. The budget handout for this Article is contained in Appendix A of this Warrant. Please also see the Finance Committee's and Town Manager's Report which includes the Finance Committee's and Select Board's recommendations.*

Article 6: Fiscal Year 2026 Capital Budget

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 in Fiscal Year 2025 and thereafter, for the purpose of funding the Fiscal Year 2026 Capital Budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Summary: *The following is the proposed Town Manager's Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2026:*

Item #1 – Pick-Up Truck **\$75,000** **Highway**

Summary: *This is a scheduled replacement. The average life of a pick-up truck is approximately 7 years. By replacing one vehicle every couple of years, this will allow the fleet to stay in good shape. They are front line pick-ups used for day-to-day operations as well as snow plowing.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Item #2 – Excavator **\$200,000** **Highway**

Summary: *This piece of equipment has turned out to be a tremendous time saver for the Department. The versatility from digging, tree pruning, log splitting and grapple work, setting curb and loading debris is outstanding. Trading in the machine a little sooner rather than later will retain its trade value tremendously. GELD contributed 75k to the last machine.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Item #3 – IT Infrastructure **\$40,000** **Town Facilities**

Summary: *This item in the Capital Budget was established over ten years ago and has been very successful. In Fiscal Year 2026, the following items will be purchased/upgraded with this allocation: 10 replacement computers; Replace aging servers and storage arrays; Investment to expand the network and keep equipment and maintenance costs current; Network switch upgrades and increased wireless coverage and improve door lock and security system maintenance.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Item #4 – Municipal Building Exterior Repairs **\$50,000** **Town Facilities**

Summary: *This appropriation will be used to continue to maintain all municipal buildings by performing various maintenance activities to prevent major breakdowns in all municipal building infrastructure. Priorities continue to change when it comes to the minor repairs and upgrades in the municipal buildings. With a set line item which is separate from minor capital, the Department can be flexible and change priorities instead of just doing it because it is on a list. Furnaces, a/c units, flooring and painting are some of the small items this capital program could handle with the flexibility provided.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Item #5 – Fork Lift/Mini Loader **\$125,000** **Transfer Station**

Summary: *This is a vital piece of equipment at the Transfer Station. It is used to load the two balers located at the facility. In addition, it is used to move the various recyclables around the facility. This piece of equipment is a work horse and this should be considered a scheduled replacement.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Item #6 – Repaint Library Interior **\$50,000** **Library**

Summary: *The Library needs a color refresh. The original paint, applied over 25 years ago, shows wear and tear throughout, and is also an outdated color scheme. By repainting the ceilings, walls, door jams, and interior window trim, and updating the color scheme of the three-story, 17,000 sq. ft. building, space can be revitalized to create a more modern but still warm, welcoming, and inviting interior to complement the other large-scale improvements made since 1999. This investment will not only enhance all public space as a whole but will be in keeping with the library's continued adaptation of services and resources to meet the community's ever evolving wants and needs. To reduce the disruption to our patrons and staff, this is a two-year phased painting project.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Item #7 – Property Improvements **\$25,000** **Park Department**

Summary: *The Park Commission has been working over the past several years developing a strategy to address deficiencies in the various Park Department Properties located throughout Groton. Since FY 2015, the Town has appropriated \$25,000 each year so that the Park Commission can develop a capital improvement program that will allow them to keep the various park locations in good shape and avoid a major construction project to much success.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Item #8 – Police Cruiser/Motorcycle **\$91,010** **Police Department**

Summary: *Purchase of a police cruiser and motorcycle, and related equipment for replacement of vehicles that are no longer cost effective to maintain. This allows for less mileage per year, better maintenance scheduling, assignment of cars to officers and for a programmed replacement schedule that ensures line cars are rotated out at reasonable mileage and wear. Unmarked cars are rotated in the same fashion. The Town had leased a motorcycle in the past on a revolving three year basis. In an effort to save money, this year the Town will purchase a motorcycle to extend the life of the vehicle to five or more years.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Item #9 – Command Vehicle **\$73,718** **Police Department**

Summary: *There are two command vehicles within the Police Department; one for the Chief and one for the Deputy Chief. This year, the Deputy Chief's command vehicle will be replaced. This should be considered a scheduled replacement.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Item #10 – Parking Lights/Building Lighting **\$12,000** **Police Department**

Summary: *This funding will be used to install 3 light poles for the parking lot. The lot originally had 2 light poles which are no longer standing. The project needs new underground conduit, concrete bases, light poles, and electrical work. Three poles allow for sufficient coverage while minimizing light pollution. In addition, the funding will be used to replace outdated fluorescent lighting in the department training room which is original to the building.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Item #11 – Electronic Control Device – “Tasers” \$10,500 Police Department

Summary: *Current Electronic Control Device (ECD, Taser) is at end-of-life and not serviceable. Axon products provide integrated data storage for both the ECD and future acquired Body-Worn-Cameras (BWC). The total cost of the ECD replacement is \$92,000. The Town received a JAG grant in the amount of \$50,000. The Town is responsible for four annual installments of \$10,500 for a total cost to the town of \$42,000. This is the first of four payments.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Item #12 – Portable Light Tower \$14,000 Police Department

Summary: *This will be used to purchase an additional tower for recurring large events requiring multiple light towers to be used at the same time, (Fireworks, Halloween, serious motor vehicle accidents).*

Select Board:
Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Item #13 – Search and Rescue Drone \$14,000 Police Department

Summary: *This Search & Rescue Drone will replace an obsolete drone that is used for large area searches for lost people/suspects.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Item #14 – Golf Carts \$25,553 Country Club

Summary: *In FY 2023, the Town replaced the fleet of twenty-five golf carts with new 21 Yamaha gas powered carts and four Yamaha electric carts using a five year lease to purchase agreement at an annual cost of approximately \$25,000. This is the fourth of five payments.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Item #15 – Ventrac Attachments \$10,918 Country Club

Summary: *In FY 2024, the Town purchased a Ventrac unit using a five year lease-to-purchase agreement at an annual cost of \$10,918. This is the second payment of five payments. The Ventrac unit is a most versatile piece of equipment. The attachments already in use include units for plowing, aeration, seeding, landscaping and mowing difficult terrain. This vehicle is used on a daily basis.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Summary: *This is an accounting procedure that is necessary so that the Community Preservation Committee will have access to the funds raised during Fiscal Year 2026. Except for the CPC Operating Expenses, none of these funds will be spent without additional approval at Town Meeting.*

Article 8: Community Preservation Funding Recommendations

To see if the Town will vote to adopt and approve the recommendations of the Community Preservation Committee for Fiscal Year 2026, and vote to implement such recommendations by appropriating a sum or sums of money from the Community Preservation Fund established pursuant to Chapter 44B of the Massachusetts General Laws, and by authorizing the Select Board, with the approval of the Community Preservation Committee, to acquire, by purchase, gift or eminent domain, such real property interests in the name of the Town, or enforceable by the Town, including real property interests in the form of permanent affordable housing restrictions and historical preservation restrictions that will meet the requirements of Chapter 184 of the Massachusetts General Laws, as may be necessary or proper to carry out the foregoing, or to take any other action relative thereto.

CPC Proposal A: West Groton Rail Trail \$70,000

Summary: *The West Groton Rail Trail Committee is requesting \$70,000 to initiate the legal process of securing the rights to a section of rail line, from the river bordering Ayer to Cutler Field, from the MBTA, as well as funding the relative environmental filings.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee:
Community Preservation Committee:

CPC Proposal B: Conservation Fund – FY 2026 \$200,000

Summary: *The Conservation Commission is requesting \$200,000 to be added to Groton’s Conservation Fund to help preserve land for open space, agricultural recreation, and forestry activities, as well as to protect water resources and wildlife habitat. The Conservation Fund allows the Town to act swiftly when a priority parcel becomes available. In the past, the Conservation Fund has been used to purchase conservation restrictions, agricultural preservation restrictions, and fee ownership of conservation land within Groton.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee:
Community Preservation Committee:

CPC Proposal C: FY 2026 Housing Funds Request \$400,000

Summary: *The Affordable Housing Trust (AHT) is requesting \$400,000 from the Community Housing Reserve in order to continue its work of creating and supporting Affordable Housing in Groton. This money will allow the AHT to respond swiftly if suitable property for Affordable Housing becomes available on the market. Community Housing Funds can be used to acquire, create, support, rehabilitate and/or restore affordable housing if acquired or created with CPA funds.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee:
Community Preservation Committee:

CPC Proposal D: Cow Pond Brook Fields Improvements \$100,000

Summary: *The Town Manager's Office and Park Commission are requesting \$100,000 to conduct an existing condition review for the large area owned by the Town of Groton between Cow Pond Brook Road and Hoyts Wharf Road, this area is currently used by athletic groups and residents for recreation. The funding will also support the development of a schematic design for the space, including preliminary permitting discussions, as well as the completion of 50% of the design development.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Community Preservation Committee:

CPC Proposal E: Housing Coordinator – FY 2026 \$63,401

Summary: *This application is requesting \$63,401 in CPA funding from the Community Housing category to fund the wages and benefits of the Housing Coordinator position for the Town of Groton (25-hours/week).*

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Community Preservation Committee:

CPC Proposal F: Bancroft Castle Preservation \$153,000

Summary: *The Groton Historic Commission is requesting \$153,000 to implement the restoration work recommended in the previously funded Phase 1 engineering analysis. This funding will help preserve the Bancroft Castle structure, and to address the public safety hazards for visitors.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Community Preservation Committee:

CPC Proposal G: Prescott Community Center \$135,000

Summary: *The Friends of Prescott and Town Manager's Office are requesting \$135,000 to renovate the deteriorated building. The proposed work includes replace failing wall materials, remove failing suspended ceilings and replacing them with new, period-appropriate tin ceiling system, eliminating suspended tubular fluorescent lighting and replacing it with new period appropriate lighting, removing carpeting and restore the hardwood flooring, and replacing the front doors with custom-designed doors to match the building's historical style.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Community Preservation Committee:

CPC Proposal H: Cow Pond Baseball Improvements \$84,330

Summary: *The Groton Dunstable Youth Baseball League with the support of the Park Commission, is requesting \$84,330 to remodel eight dugouts, remodel four batting cages, and rebuild the pitching mounds on all four baseball fields at the Cow Pond Brook Fields.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Community Preservation Committee:

CPC Proposal I: Town Field Improvements \$378,963

Summary: *The Town Manager's Office and Park Commission are requesting \$378,963 to renovate the major league baseball diamond at Town Field. This project builds on the previously funded design study and will renovate the infield, place new backstops, the placement players benches on concrete pads with chain-link fences, and landscape of the outfield.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee:
Community Preservation Committee:

CPC Proposal J: Curatorial Storage \$62,675

Summary: *The Groton Historical Society is requesting \$62,675 to improve storage conditions on the third floor of the Boutwell House, where approximately 30% of the GHS's collection of historic objects are housed. The project will include minor conservation of items, repairs to the walls and ceilings, installation of storage shelving, and the addition of mechanical ventilation to reduce extreme summer temperatures.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee:
Community Preservation Committee:

CPC Proposal K: Williams Barn Restoration \$158,972

Summary: *The Williams Barn Committee is requesting \$158,972 to renovate the 185-year-old historic structure. The work will include repairing a section of the foundation wall, replacing sills, the gable end fascia, and soffit boards, replacing two cracked support beams, and adding handrails to improve safety for all.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee:
Community Preservation Committee:

Community Preservation Committee

Article 9: *Proposed Amendments to the Groton Charter*

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to petition the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for a special act to amend the Town Charter as set forth in Appendix C of this Warrant, provided, however, that the General Court may make clerical or editorial changes of form only to the bill, unless the Select Board approves amendments thereto 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.

Charter Review Committee

Select Board:
Finance Committee: *No Position*
Charter Review Committee:

Summary: *The Groton Charter requires periodic review every ten years. In 2024, a Committee was formed to review the Charter and determine if changes were warranted. The Committee solicited input from the public and has reviewed suggestions and concerns during meetings over the last six months. The revised Charter seeks to (1) address this input; (2) address the appointment of the Police Chief, Fire Chief and Town Clerk; and (3) clear up inconsistencies in the current Charter. A vote in favor of this Article will be the first step in adopting the revised Charter. A vote against this Article will allow the current Charter to remain in force.*

Article 10: Act to Adopt Alternative Methods for Notice of Public Hearings

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to petition the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for a special act regarding notice of public hearings as follows:

AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE TOWN OF GROTON TO ADOPT ALTERNATIVE METHODS FOR NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same as follows:

Section 1. Notwithstanding section 11 of chapter 40A of the general laws, or any general or special law to the contrary, the town of Groton may adopt and further amend general by-laws that regulate the publishing of legal notices of public hearings on the official website operated by the town.

Section 2. The town's general by-laws may provide that all legal notices of public hearings shall be published: (i) (A) in a local newspaper, either in electronic or paper format; or (B) on the bulletin board outside the town clerk's office; and (ii) on the official website operated by the town.

Section 3. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

provided, however, that the General Court may make clerical or editorial changes of form only to the bill, unless the Select Board approves amendments thereto 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.

Select Board

Select Board:

Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Summary: *In an effort to continually look for ways in which reductions can be made in the municipal budget, this article seeks Town Meeting approval for the Select Board to petition the General Court for alternative methods for posting notices of public hearings. This will allow for more flexibility in how public hearing notices are posted for public viewing. Currently, Chapter 40A, Section 11 of the General Laws requires the Town to print all legal notices for public hearings in a newspaper of general circulation. This Home Rule Petition would allow the Town to save on newspaper printing and publishing costs by allowing town departments, boards, committees, and commissions the added flexibility to post in the local newspaper electronically, or on the bulletin board located near the Town Clerk's Office and on the Town's website. Publishing legal notices in the local newspaper will still be an option for those choosing that method of posting. There are currently seven (7) cities and towns in the Commonwealth that recently had similar Home Rule Petitions approved by the General Court and enacted by the Governor.*

Article 11: 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 deleting Section 81-4(A) in its entirety and replacing said section with the following:

§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 commence at times set forth in the warrants for said town meetings approved by the Select Board. The annual election of officers and other voting by ballot shall be held on the third Tuesday in May of each year, at which time the polls shall remain open from 7:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m.

or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Select Board:

Finance Committee: No Position

Summary: *The current bylaw states that the Annual Election shall be held on the fourth Tuesday following the first session of the Spring Town Meeting. In some years, when the Town Meeting is not held prior to the last Monday in April, the current wording could set the Annual Town Election the day after Memorial Day. To avoid that in the future, this Article proposes setting the Annual Town Election every year on the third Tuesday in May, regardless of when the first session of Town Meeting is held.*

Article 12: Disposition of Town Owned Land on Hoyts Wharf Road

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to dispose of by sale, or lease for a period not to exceed 99 years, that certain property or portions thereof located off Hoyts Wharf Road consisting of portions of Assessors Parcels 249-51 and 249-57, containing approximately 8.3 acres, and shown as "Lot 2" and "Parcel A" on a plan entitled "MESA Site Plan" by Dillis & Roy, dated February 12, 2025, a copy of which is on file in the Town Clerk's office, for such minimum consideration and on such terms and conditions as the Select Board deems advisable, to provide affordable housing, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Affordable Housing Trust

Select Board:

Finance Committee: No Position

Summary: *The Affordable Housing Trust has identified a parcel of Town owned land 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 13: Amend Chapter 125 “Demolition Delay” of the Town Bylaws

To see if the Town will vote to amend Chapter 125 “Demolition Delay” of the General Bylaws of the Town by deleting Chapter 125 in its entirety and replacing it with a new Chapter 125 “Demolition Delay” as follows (please see Appendix D of this Warrant for the red-lined changes to the current Chapter 125):

Chapter 125 Demolition Delay

§ 125-1. Intent and purpose.

- A. The Demolition Delay Bylaw is enacted for the purpose of preserving and protecting significant buildings within the Town of Groton. Such buildings reflect distinctive features of the architectural, cultural, economic, political or social history of the Town, and their preservation protects these historic architectural assets which contribute to the overall culture of the community.
- B. The intent of the bylaw is to provide an opportunity to develop preservation solutions for distinctive and preserved historic properties threatened with demolition. The bylaw is intended to encourage owners and townspeople, with assistance from the Groton Historical Commission, to seek out persons who might be willing to purchase, preserve, rehabilitate or restore such buildings rather than demolish them, and to limit the detrimental effect of demolition on the historical architectural resources of the Town. To achieve these purposes, the Groton Historical Commission is empowered to advise the Building Inspector with respect to the issuance of permits for demolition of significant buildings, and, where appropriate and consistent with the intent and purpose of this chapter, to allow demolition under conditions designed to minimize the loss of distinctive features of significant buildings. The issuance of demolition permits is regulated as provided by this bylaw.

§ 125-2. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

APPLICANT — Any person or persons who is either the owner or legally representing the owner and applying for a permit to demolish any building or structure. The applicant may not apply for a permit to demolish any building or structure on behalf of a future owner. The process outlined in this Bylaw resets upon the transfer of ownership of a property.

BUILDING — A structure enclosed within exterior walls or firewalls, built, erected and framed of a combination of any materials to form a structure for the shelter of persons, animals or property.

BUILDING INSPECTOR — The Town of Groton Building Commissioner, who is charged with the administration and enforcement of the State Building Code, 780 CMR, and is authorized to issue demolition permits.

COMMISSION — The Groton Historical Commission, which is charged with the identification, documentation and preservation of the historical resources of Groton.

DEMOLITION — Any act of pulling down, destroying, removing, razing or moving a building or commencing the work of moving or of total or substantial destruction with the intent of completing the same. Substantial demolition is defined as irreparably removing or altering any historically significant feature of a structure or removing twenty-five (25) percent of the volume of the structure or twenty-five (25) percent of the roof structure. This includes rebuilding any portion of a structure in which more than fifty (50) percent of the materials are replaced.

DEMOLITION PERMIT — The permit issued by the Building Inspector as required by the State Building Code for the demolition, substantial demolition or removal of a building.

HISTORICALLY OR ARCHITECTURALLY SIGNIFICANT BUILDING — Any building which, in whole or in part, is at least 75 years old, or is of unknown age and:

- A. Is listed on, or is a contributing building within an area listed on, the National Register of Historic Places, or is the subject of a pending application for such listing, or is eligible for such listing; or
- B. Is included in the Cultural Resources Inventory prepared by the Historical Commission; or
- C. Has been determined by vote of the Historical Commission to be a significant building after a finding by the Historical Commission that the building meets one or more of the following three criteria:
 - (1) Historical importance. The building meets the criterion of historical importance if it:
 - (a) Has character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the Town of Groton, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or the nation; or
 - (b) Is the site of an historic event; or
 - (c) Is identified with a person or group of persons who had significant influence on society; or
 - (d) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historic heritage of the community.
 - (2) Architectural importance. The structure meets the criterion of architectural importance if it:
 - (a) Portrays the environment of a group of people in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or
 - (b) Embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type; or
 - (c) Is the work of an architect, master builder or craftsman whose individual work has influenced the development of the Town of Groton or a wider region; or
 - (d) Contains elements of architectural design, detail, materials or craftsmanship, which represents a significant innovation.
 - (3) Geographic importance. The structure meets the criterion of geographic importance if:
 - (a) The site is part of or related to a square, park, or other distinctive area; or
 - (b) The structure, as to its unique location or its physical characteristics, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, village center, or the community as a whole.

§ 125-3. Procedure.

- A. No permit for the demolition of a significant building or part thereof shall be issued except as provided in this chapter, as well as in conformity with the provisions of other laws and bylaws applicable to the demolition of buildings and the issuance of permits generally.
- B. Application contents. Every application for a demolition permit shall be filed with the Building Inspector and shall contain the following information:
 - (1) The address of the building to be demolished;
 - (2) The owner's name, address and telephone number;
 - (3) A brief description of the type of building and the condition requiring issuance of the permit;
 - (4) Age of building as established by the Board of Assessors, deed or documentation verifying year of construction;
 - (5) A brief description of the proposed reuse, reconstruction or replacement;
 - (6) Photographs clearly depicting the building in question.
- C. Within seven (7) days after receipt of any application for a demolition permit, the Building Inspector shall forward a copy to the Commission. No demolition permit shall be issued during this time.
- D. Within thirty (30) days after receipt of a copy of the application for demolition permit from the Building Inspector, the Historical Commission or its designee shall make a determination of architectural and/or historical significance ("determination of significance"). Upon determination by the Historical Commission that the building is not architecturally and/or historically significant, the Historical Commission shall so notify the Building Inspector and the applicant in writing. Upon receipt of such notification, or after the

expiration of thirty (30) days from the date of application submission to the Building Department if the Building Inspector has not received notification from the Historical Commission, the Building Inspector may issue the demolition permit. Upon determination by the Historical Commission that the building is historically and/or architecturally significant, the Building Inspector and the applicant shall be so notified by the Historical Commission in writing within thirty (30) days from the date of application submission to the Building Department, and a demolition permit shall not be issued.

- E. The Historical Commission shall hold a public hearing within thirty (30) days of the determination of significance to determine whether the building should be preferably preserved. Public notice of the time, place and purpose of the hearing shall be published by the Historical Commission at the expense of the applicant in a newspaper of general circulation in the Town or online platform of comparable reach, as approved by the Commission, not less than fourteen (14) days before the day of said hearing and shall be posted on the Town's website for the same period.
- F. The Commission shall decide at the public hearing or within fourteen (14) days after the public hearing whether the building should be preferably preserved. If agreed to in writing by the applicant, the determination of the Commission may be postponed.
- G. If after a public hearing the Historical Commission determines that the significant building should not be preferably preserved, the Historical Commission shall, within twenty-one (21) days after the hearing, notify in writing the Building Inspector and the applicant of the determination and the Building Inspector may issue a demolition permit upon receipt of the written determination.
- H. If after a public hearing the Historical Commission determines that the significant building should be preferably preserved ("preservation determination"), the Historical Commission shall, within twenty-one (21) days after the hearing, notify in writing the Building Inspector and the applicant, and no demolition permit may be issued until twenty-four (24) months after the date of the preservation determination by the Historical Commission, and the applicant has met the requirements outlined in section 125-4.I. Upon a determination by the Commission that a building is preferably preserved, no building permit for new construction or alterations to the subject building shall be issued for a period of twenty-four (24) months from the date of the determination unless otherwise agreed to by the Commission.
- J. Following the twenty-four (24) month delay period, no permit for demolition of a building determined to be a preferably preserved building shall be granted until all plans for future use and development of the site have been filed with the Building Inspector and have found to comply with all laws pertaining to the issuance of a building permit and any other approvals necessary for the intended use. All approvals necessary for the issuance of such building permit or certificate of occupancy including without limitation any necessary zoning variances or special permits, must be granted and all appeals from the granting of such approvals must be concluded, prior to the issuance of a demolition permit under this section.
- K. If the site is proposed to be vacant, the property owner must file a signed affidavit with the Building Inspector attesting that no development is planned for the site and that it will remain in a vacant state for the foreseeable future. No permit for any type of construction may be granted for the property in question under this subsection for an additional period of twenty-four (24) months following the expiration of the demolition delay, unless an exemption is granted by the Historical Commission.
- L. Notwithstanding anything contained in Subsection G, the Building Inspector may issue a demolition permit for a building with a preservation determination at any time after receipt of written advice from the Historical Commission to the effect that either:
 - (1) The Historical Commission is satisfied that there is no reasonable likelihood that either the owner or some other person or group is willing to purchase, preserve, rehabilitate or restore such building; or
 - (2) The Historical Commission is satisfied that for at least twenty-four (24) months the applicant has made continuing, bona fide and reasonable efforts to locate a purchaser to preserve, rehabilitate or restore the subject building, and that such efforts have been unsuccessful.

§ 125-4. Responsibility of owners.

- A. Once a significant building is given a determination of significance by the Historical Commission, the applicant and owner shall be responsible for properly securing the building to the satisfaction of the Building

Inspector, whether occupied or vacant. Should the applicant fail to so secure the building and the significant building is destroyed at any time during the twenty-four (24) month demolition delay period and such destruction could have been prevented by the required security measures as determined by the Building Inspector, it shall be considered a demolition in violation of this chapter.

- B. Also, the applicant shall allow the Historical Commission or a designee appointed by the Historical Commission access to the significant building and property, for the purpose of documenting the building under the survey process of the Massachusetts Historical Commission and for the purpose of showing the building to prospective purchasers or preservers.
- C. During the entire twenty-four (24) month demolition delay period, the property owner shall make a good faith effort to sell the property in order to preserve the building, unless granted an exemption by vote of the Historical Commission. "Good faith efforts" shall include the following:

(1) The significant building must be sold along with the land on which it currently sits to maintain its historic context. For the avoidance of doubt this requirement cannot be satisfied by the owner offering the building to be moved to another location, unless such relocation is approved by the Historical Commission. The amount of land to be sold with the significant building shall be governed by all applicable zoning regulations. If legally permitted, this may include the subdivision of the property. Any related expenses will be borne by the applicant.

(2) The property in question must be publicly advertised for sale. This includes the conspicuous posting of such notice on the property, as well as in at least one (1) other suitable public outlet typically utilized by persons offering real estate for sale (including, but not limited to, the Multiple Listing Service). This shall be done at the owner's sole expense. The twenty-four (24) month demolition delay period shall not begin until the provisions of this section are met and the applicant informs the Commission of such. If at any time during the demolition delay period the applicant ceases to meet the provisions of this section, the delay period may be paused until the provisions are once again met. The Commission will notify the applicant of any such pause, and the reason for the same.

(3) The offer for sale must be constructed in a bona fide and commercially reasonable manner. The object of this provision is limited to preventing the owner from impeding the preservation of the property by offering the property for sale other than on commercially reasonable terms.

(4) If the owner declines an offer to purchase the property in question and does not accept another offer within two (2) weeks, the applicant must inform the Commission, in writing, of the offer price and the reason that the offer was declined. The owner shall document such good faith efforts and provide reports to the Commission, at least once every two (2) months during the delay period, of such good faith efforts.

§ 125-5. Emergency demolition.

- A. Notwithstanding the other provisions of this chapter, the Building Inspector may issue a demolition permit at any time in the event of imminent and substantial danger to the health and safety of the public due to deteriorating conditions. Prior to doing so, the Building Inspector shall inspect the building and document, in writing, the findings and reasons requiring an emergency demolition, a copy of which shall be forwarded immediately to the Historical Commission. Before allowing emergency demolition, the Building Inspector shall make every effort to inform the Chairperson of the Commission of his intention to allow demolition.
- B. No provision of this chapter is intended to conflict with or abridge any obligations or rights conferred by Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 143, regarding removal or demolition of dangerous or abandoned structures. In the event of a conflict, the applicable provisions of Chapter 143 shall control.

§ 125-6. Enforcement and remedies.

- A. The Historical Commission is authorized to adopt rules and regulations to carry out its duties and functions under this chapter
- B. The Historical Commission is specifically authorized to institute any and all actions and proceedings, in law or equity, as it may deem necessary and appropriate to obtain compliance with the requirements of this chapter or

to prevent a threatened violation thereof.

- C. No building permit for any premises upon which a significant building has been voluntarily demolished in violation of this chapter shall be issued for a period of two years after the date of the completion of such demolition. The design shall first be reviewed, and must be accepted by, the Historical Commission. As used herein, "premises" refers to the parcel of land upon which the demolished significant building was located and all adjoining parcels of land under common ownership or control.
- D. Notwithstanding the foregoing, whenever the Historical Commission shall, on its own initiative or on application of the applicant, determine that earlier reconstruction, restoration or other remediation of any demolition in violation of this chapter better serves the intent and purpose of this chapter, it may, prior to the expiration of said period of two years, authorize issuance of a building permit, upon such conditions as the Historical Commission deems necessary or appropriate to effectuate the purposes of this chapter, and may so notify the Building Inspector.
- E. If the property owner fails to abide by the terms of section 125-4, the Historical Commission may pause the demolition delay period until the provisions are met.
- F. The Commission is authorized to adopt a schedule of reasonable fees to cover the costs associated with the administration of this bylaw.
- G. Any owner of a building subject to this bylaw that demolished the building without first obtaining a demolition permit in accordance with the provisions of this bylaw shall be subject to a fine of not more than Three Hundred Dollars (\$300). Each day the violation exists shall constitute a separate offense until a faithful recreation of the demolished building is completed or unless otherwise agreed to by the Commission.

§ 125-7. Historic District Act.

Nothing in this chapter shall be deemed to conflict with the provisions of the Historic Districts Act, Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40C. If any of the provisions of this chapter do so conflict, that act shall prevail. Following a determination that the building is significant and preferably preserved, the Commission may recommend to town meeting that the building be protected through the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40C, the Historic Districts Act. The steps required under M.G.L. Chapter 40C shall be followed prior to the establishment of a local historic district. Buildings included within the boundaries of a local historic district established under M.G.L. Chapter 40C shall not be subject to this bylaw so long as the proposed demolition is regulated by the local historic district bylaw.

§ 125-8. Severability.

In case any section, paragraph or part of this chapter is for any reason declared invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, every other section, paragraph and part shall continue in full force and effect.

or to take any other action relative thereto.

Historical Commission

Select Board:

Finance Committee: No Position

Summary: *The Groton Historical Commission is proposing a set of revisions to increase the effectiveness of the Town's Demolition Delay Bylaw, which provides the only formal protections for historic structures in Groton located outside of the Town's Historic Districts. The revisions are intended to clarify the process and align it with best practices adopted by other municipalities and those recommended by the Massachusetts Historical Commission. Key changes include extending the maximum length of the delay from 18 to 24 months; defining the tools available to the Groton Historical Commission to regulate the process; and clarifying the responsibilities of property owners regarding the (previously existing) requirement to offer the historical structure in question for sale to a party interested in preserving it during the term of the demolition delay.*

Article 14: Adopt Resolution – Reduce Statewide Greenhouse Gas Emissions

To see if the Town will vote to adopt the following resolution in support of reducing Statewide Greenhouse Gas Emissions: *“Groton affirms its support for the goal established by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to reduce statewide greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero by 2050. Groton commits to evaluate and implement strategies to reduce emissions in municipal activities with a goal of eliminating all onsite burning of fossil fuels in municipal buildings and vehicles by 2050 and support residents and businesses in reducing emissions.”*

or to take any other action relative thereto.

Select Board

Select Board:

Finance Committee: No Position

Summary: *The Climate Action Working Group was a multi-stakeholder group formed by the Town Manager to assess attitudes towards climate action in the Town. The Working Group convened over a five-month period in 2024, meeting with fourteen community stakeholder groups and Town departments, and surveying over 300 residents. The group discovered strong support for local climate action from residents, the business community and town departments, including support for the Massachusetts mandate for statewide greenhouse gas emissions to reach net zero by 2050. This resolution is intended to formally declare the town’s support for the state mandate, to continue municipal efforts to reduce emissions from municipal operations and to assist residents and businesses in reducing their emissions. Municipal activities are taxpayer funded activities. In addition, passing this resolution is a mandatory step in the process of becoming a Climate Leader community, a state designation that provides increased funding assistance for municipal projects aimed at reducing emissions through energy efficiency, electrification and clean energy, all of which can also reduce municipal operating costs.*

Article 15: Amend Floodplain Overlay District

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

1. **Delete Section 218-7.1 Floodplain District Regulations** in its entirety.
2. **Insert the following new Section 218-7.1 Floodplain Overlay District.**

Section 218-7.1 Floodplain Overlay District

- A. The purpose of the Floodplain Overlay District and this Floodplain Bylaw is to:
 - 1) Ensure public safety through reducing the threats to life and personal injury
 - 2) Eliminate new hazards to emergency response officials
 - 3) Prevent the occurrence of public emergencies resulting from water quality, contamination, and pollution due to flooding
 - 4) Avoid the loss of utility services which if damaged by flooding would disrupt or shut down the utility network and impact regions of the community beyond the site of flooding
 - 5) Eliminate costs associated with the response and cleanup of flooding conditions
 - 6) Reduce damage to public and private property resulting from flooding waters

- B. The Floodplain Overlay District is established as an overlay district. The Floodplain Overlay District includes all special flood hazard areas within the Town of Groton designated as Zone A, AE on the Middlesex County Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) dated July 8, 2025 issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the administration of the National Flood Insurance Program. The exact boundaries of the Floodplain Overlay District shall be defined by the 1%-chance base flood elevations shown on the FIRM and further defined by the Middlesex County Flood Insurance Study (FIS) report dated July 8, 2025. The FIRM and FIS report are incorporated herein by reference and are on file with the Town Clerk, Planning Board, Building Commissioner, and Conservation Commission.

- C. The Building Commissioner shall be the official floodplain administrator for the Town.
- D. No new building or structure shall be erected in the Floodplain Overlay District except in accordance with this Section 218-7.1.
- E. The Town of Groton requires a permit for all proposed construction or other development in the Floodplain Overlay District, including new construction or changes to existing buildings, placement of manufactured homes, placement of agricultural facilities, fences, sheds, storage facilities or drilling, mining, paving and any other development that might increase flooding or adversely impact flood risks to other properties.
- F. The Town's permit review process includes the requirement that the proponent obtain all local, state and federal permits that will be necessary in order to carry out the proposed development in the Floodplain Overlay District. The proponent must acquire all necessary permits, and must demonstrate that all necessary permits have been acquired.
- G. In Zones A and AE, along watercourses that have not had a regulatory floodway designated, the best available Federal, State, local, or other floodway data shall be used to prohibit encroachments in floodways which would result in any increase in flood levels within the community during the occurrence of the base flood discharge.
- In Zone AE, along watercourses that have a regulatory floodway designated on the Town's FIRM encroachments are prohibited, including fill, new construction, substantial improvements, and other development within the adopted regulatory floodway unless it has been demonstrated through hydrologic and hydraulic analyses performed in accordance with standard engineering practice that the proposed encroachment would not result in any increase in flood levels within the community during the occurrence of the base flood discharge.
- H. In A Zones, in the absence of FEMA BFE data and floodway data, the building department will obtain, review and reasonably utilize base flood elevation and floodway data available from a Federal, State, or other source as criteria for requiring new construction, substantial improvements, or other development in Zone A and as the basis for elevating residential structures to or above base flood level, for floodproofing or elevating nonresidential structures to or above base flood level, and for prohibiting encroachments in floodways.
- I. All subdivision proposals and development proposals in the Floodplain Overlay District shall be reviewed to assure that:
- (a) Such proposals minimize flood damage.
 - (b) Public utilities and facilities are located & constructed so as to minimize flood damage.
 - (c) Adequate drainage is provided.
- J. When proposing subdivisions or other developments greater than 50 lots or 5 acres (whichever is less), the proponent must provide technical data to determine base flood elevations for each developable parcel shown on the design plans.
- K. In A and AE Zones, all recreational vehicles to be placed on a site must be elevated and anchored in accordance with the zone's regulations for foundation and elevation requirements or be on the site for less than 180 consecutive days or be fully licensed and highway ready.
- L. In a riverine situation, the Building Commissioner shall notify the following of any alteration or relocation of a watercourse:
- Adjacent Communities, especially upstream and downstream
 - Bordering States, if affected
 - NFIP State Coordinator Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
 - NFIP Program Specialist Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region I

M. If the Town acquires data that changes the base flood elevation in the FEMA mapped Special Flood Hazard Areas, the Town will, within 6 months, notify FEMA of these changes by submitting the technical or scientific data that supports the change(s.) Notification shall be submitted to:

- NFIP State Coordinator
Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
- NFIP Program Specialist
Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region I

N. Variances to building code floodplain standards. The Town will request from the State Building Code Appeals Board a written and/or audible copy of the portion of the hearing related to the variance and will maintain this record in the community's files. The Town shall also issue a letter to the property owner regarding potential impacts to the annual premiums for the flood insurance policy covering that property, in writing over the signature of a community official that (i) the issuance of a variance to construct a structure below the base flood level will result in increased premium rates for flood insurance up to amounts as high as \$25 for \$100 of insurance coverage and (ii) such construction below the base flood level increases risks to life and property. Such notification shall be maintained with the record of all variance actions for the referenced development in the Floodplain Overlay District.

O. Variances to local Zoning Bylaws related to community compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). A variance from this Floodplain Bylaw must meet the requirements set out by State law, as applicable, and may only be granted if: 1) Good and sufficient cause and exceptional non-financial hardship exist; 2) the variance will not result in additional threats to public safety, extraordinary public expense, or fraud or victimization of the public; and 3) the variance is the minimum action necessary to afford relief. A variance under this Floodplain Bylaw shall be distinct from a variance under M.G.L. c. 40A, Section 10 and Section 218-2.4 of the Zoning Bylaw.

P. The floodplain management regulations found in this Floodplain Overlay District section shall take precedence over any less restrictive conflicting local laws, ordinances or codes.

Q. The degree of flood protection required by this Floodplain Bylaw is considered reasonable but does not imply total flood protection.

R. If any section, provision, or portion of this Floodplain Bylaw is deemed to be unconstitutional or invalid by a court, the remainder of the ordinance shall be effective.

S. Definitions not found in the State Building Code, which are applicable only within this Floodplain Bylaw and do not govern other sections of the Zoning Bylaw.

DEVELOPMENT means any man-made change to improved or unimproved real estate, including but not limited to building or other structures, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavation or drilling operations or storage of equipment or materials. [US Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Part 59]

FLOODWAY. The channel of the river, creek or other watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than a designated height. [Base Code, Chapter 2, Section 202]

FUNCTIONALLY DEPENDENT USE means a use which cannot perform its intended purpose unless it is located or carried out in close proximity to water. The term includes only docking facilities, port facilities that are necessary for the loading and unloading of cargo or passengers, and ship building and ship repair facilities, but does not include long-term storage or related manufacturing facilities. [US Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Part 59] Also [Referenced Standard ASCE 24-14]

HIGHEST ADJACENT GRADE means the highest natural elevation of the ground surface prior to construction next to the proposed walls of a structure. [US Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Part 59]

HISTORIC STRUCTURE means any structure that is:

- (a) Listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places (a listing maintained by the Department of Interior) or preliminarily determined by the Secretary of the Interior as meeting the requirements for individual listing on the National Register;
- (b) Certified or preliminarily determined by the Secretary of the Interior as contributing to the historical significance of a registered historic district or a district preliminarily determined by the Secretary to qualify as a registered historic district;
- (c) Individually listed on a state inventory of historic places in states with historic preservation programs which have been approved by the Secretary of the Interior; or
- (d) Individually listed on a local inventory of historic places in communities with historic preservation programs that have been certified either:

(1) By an approved state program as determined by the Secretary of the Interior or

(2) Directly by the Secretary of the Interior in states without approved programs.

[US Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Part 59]

NEW CONSTRUCTION. Structures for which the start of construction commenced on or after the effective date of the first floodplain management code, regulation, ordinance, or standard adopted by the authority having jurisdiction, including any subsequent improvements to such structures. *New construction includes work determined to be substantial improvement.* [Referenced Standard ASCE 24-14]

RECREATIONAL VEHICLE means a vehicle which is:

- (a) Built on a single chassis;
- (b) 400 square feet or less when measured at the largest horizontal projection;
- (c) Designed to be self-propelled or permanently towable by a light duty truck; and
- (d) Designed primarily not for use as a permanent dwelling but as temporary living quarters for recreational, camping, travel, or seasonal use. [US Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Part 59]

REGULATORY FLOODWAY - see FLOODWAY.

SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREA. The land area subject to flood hazards and shown on a Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard map as Zone A, AE, A1-30, A99, AR, AO, AH. [Base Code, Chapter 2, Section 202]

START OF CONSTRUCTION. The date of issuance for new construction and substantial improvements to existing structures, provided the actual start of construction, repair, reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition, placement or other improvement is within 180 days after the date of issuance. The actual start of construction means the first placement of permanent construction of a building (including a manufactured home) on a site, such as the pouring of a slab or footings, installation of pilings or construction of columns. Permanent construction does not include land preparation (such as clearing, excavation, grading or filling), the installation of streets or walkways, excavation for a basement, footings, piers or foundations, the erection of temporary forms or the installation of accessory buildings such as garages or sheds not occupied as dwelling units or not part of the main building. For a substantial improvement, the actual "start of construction" means the first alteration of any wall, ceiling, floor or other structural part of a building, whether or not that alteration affects the external dimensions of the building. [Base Code, Chapter 2, Section 202]

STRUCTURE means, for floodplain management purposes, a walled and roofed building, including a gas or liquid storage tank, that is principally above ground, as well as a manufactured home. [US Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Part 59]

SUBSTANTIAL REPAIR OF A FOUNDATION. When work to repair or replace a foundation results in the repair or replacement of a portion of the foundation with a perimeter along the base of the foundation that equals or exceeds 50% of the perimeter of the base of the foundation measured in linear feet, or repair or replacement of 50% of the piles, columns or piers of a pile, column or pier supported foundation, the building official shall determine it to be substantial repair of a foundation. Applications determined by the building official to constitute substantial repair of a

foundation shall require all existing portions of the entire building or structure to meet the requirements of 780 CMR. [As amended by MA in 9th Edition BC]

VARIANCE means a grant of relief by a community from the terms of a flood plain management regulation. [US Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Part 59]

VIOLATION means the failure of a structure or other development to be fully compliant with the community's flood plain management regulations. A structure or other development without the elevation certificate, other certifications, or other evidence of compliance required in §60.3 is presumed to be in violation until such time as that documentation is provided. [US Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Part 59]

or to take any other action relative thereto.

Planning Board

Select Board:

Finance Committee: *No Position*

Planning Board:

Summary: *This article amends the existing floodplain regulations in the zoning bylaw to comply with the requirements of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The amendments required by FEMA include updating the references to the new Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) for Groton and incorporating the applicable provisions of the Massachusetts Model Floodplain Bylaw. The new FIRM for Groton will become effective on July 8, 2025.*

Article 16: *Endorse Comprehensive Master Plan*

To see if the Town will vote to endorse the “Groton Master Plan” dated February, 2025, filed in the Office of the Town Clerk on February 28, 2025, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Planning Board

Select Board:

Finance Committee: *No Position*

Planning Board:

Summary: *The Planning Board will present the Master Plan to Town Meeting for its endorsement. Copies of the plan are available in the Planning Board office in the Town Hall, at the Groton Public Library and on the Town's web site: www.grotonma.gov*

Article 17: *MBTA Communities Multi-Family Overlay District (MCMOD)*

To see if the Town will vote to amend Chapter 218 Zoning Bylaws of the Town of Groton as follows:

Amend Section 218-3 Definitions by Deleting the definition for “Multifamily Use” in its entirety,

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

AFFORDABLE UNIT.

A multi-family housing unit that is subject to a use restriction recorded in its chain of title limiting the sale price or rent or limiting occupancy to an individual or household of a specified income, or both.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Any combination of Affordable Units restricted in perpetuity to persons of families qualifying as low or moderate income under the guidelines of EOHLIC earning less than 50% of median income for low income and less than 80% of median income for moderate income.

AS OF RIGHT.

Development that may proceed under the Zoning Bylaw without the need for a special permit, variance, zoning amendment, waiver, or other discretionary zoning approval. Also known as “by right” development.

MBTA COMMUNITIES MULTI FAMILY OVERLAY DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT (MCMODD).

Multi-family use that is located in the Multi-Family Development Overlay District (MCMOD) in accordance with the provisions of Section 218-7.5 MBTA Communities Multi Family Development Overlay District.

MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT.

Development containing a mix of residential uses and non-residential uses, including, commercial, institutional, industrial, or other uses.

MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING

A building with three or more residential dwelling units or two or more buildings on the same lot with more than one residential dwelling unit in each building. Also known as “multifamily use.”

Amend Section 218-4 Zoning Districts as follows:

Insert under subsection 218-4.1 E, Overlay Districts the following:

“(6) MBTA Communities Multi-Family Overlay District (MCMOD)”

Insert under subsection 218-4.2 Intention of Districts the following sub sections:

“J. MCMOD – MBTA Communities Multi-Family Overlay District is intended to provide for higher density residential development at locations in proximity to infrastructure, services, and nexuses of activity, amenities, and development.

Insert a new Section 218-7.5 Multi Family Development Overlay District to read as follows:

218-7.5 – MBTA COMMUNITIES MULTI-FAMILY OVERLAY DISTRICT (MCMOD)

A. Purpose

- To transition from a case by case permitting process for Multi-Family Development and establish a transparent and predictable process for the permitting of MBTA Communities Multi-Family Overlay District Development (MCMODD) in designated locations with specific guidelines and criteria.
- To encourage MCMODD in sensible locations in terms of services, infrastructure, transportation access, economic opportunity, and compatibility with surrounding uses.
- To accommodate compatible uses that serve residents and the general public.
- To increase housing choice and diversity and address the local and regional need for additional housing
- Preserve open space in a community by locating new housing within or adjacent to existing developed areas and infrastructure.
-

B. Applicability.

This MCMOD is an overlay district that is superimposed over the underlying zoning district (s) and is shown on the Zoning Map. Within the boundaries of the MCMOD, all of the uses permitted in the underlying District(s) in which the subject land is located are permitted, subject to the same use and development regulations as may otherwise apply

thereto and shall remain in full force. Alternatively, one or more of the uses set forth in Section 218-7.5.C shall be permitted as part of a MCMODD in accordance with this Section 218-7.5 subject to Site Plan Review by the Planning Board in accordance with Section 218-2.5.

C. Permitted Uses

1. As of Right Uses

Any or combination of multi-family residential uses are permitted as of right including but not limited to the following uses

- a. Duplex attached units
- b. Townhouses
- c. Garden Flats
- d. Uses exempt by statute (MGL c.40A §3)
- e. Mixed-Use Development
 - i. Non-residential uses allowed as-of-right in the underlying zoning district located on the ground floor of a mixed-use building
 - ii. Multi-family use allowed on any floor of a mixed-use building

2. Accessory Uses

The following uses are considered accessory to any of the permitted uses in Section D.1 and allowed as of right:

- a. Parking, including surface parking and parking within a structure such as an above ground or underground parking garage or other building on the same lot as the principal use.
- b. Home occupation employing only household members and no on-site clients.
- c. Accessory Dwelling Unit.

D. Development Standards.

- 1. The minimum lot area for a MCMODD shall be 10,000 square feet and may be comprised by one or more contiguous parcels.
- 2. The minimum Lot Frontage shall be 75 feet.
- 3. No building or structure within a MCMODD shall be less than 15 feet from the exterior lot line.
- 4. Lot coverage of a MCMODD by buildings and other impervious surface shall not exceed 75% of the lot area, unless the applicant provides sufficient justification for a waiver and the Planning Board determines, as part of Site Plan Review that a greater lot coverage will not adversely affect adjacent properties.
- 5. No structure shall exceed four (4) stories, fifty-five (55) feet in height, measured in accordance with the Building Height standards set forth in Section 218-3.
- 6. No structure or group of structures, except one-story garages or carports, shall be nearer to each other than twenty (20) feet. Carports or garages, if not directly attached, shall be at least ten (10) feet from the main buildings.
- 7. The maximum permitted density shall not exceed 15 (fifteen) dwelling units per acre.
- 8. A MCMODD shall conform with the provisions of Section 218-8.2. Off-Street Parking and Loading. Parking areas shall otherwise comply with the provisions of Section 218-8.2 unless the applicant provides sufficient justification for a waiver and the Planning Board determines, as part of Site Plan Review, that the grant of such waiver will not adversely affect the neighborhood.
- 9. All dwelling units in a Multi-Family Development shall be without age restrictions and shall be suitable for families with children.
- 10. Sewage shall be disposed of by means of adequate connections to the municipal sewer system or a system Approved by the Board of Health pursuant to Title 5.

E. Design Standards

To the maximum extent feasible, projects shall comply with the following design standards:

1. Site Design, Open Space and Landscaping
 - a. Projects shall be sited to maximize opportunities for creating usable, attractive, well-integrated Open Space.
 - b. Acceptable activities within the minimum required Open Space include natural areas (including wetlands and surface waters), wildlife and native plant habitat, landscape plantings, agricultural activities, low-impact design stormwater management, non-motorized trails, and other low-impact activities. Open Space shall not contain habitable structures.
 - c. Open Space shall be planned as a single contiguous area and, to the extent practicable, configured contiguously with any abutting conservation open areas.
 - d. Open Space intended for public use shall have direct access from one or more streets, pedestrian paths, sidewalks, and/or other public access.
 - e. Landscape design shall strive to provide greenery so that streets and access drives are lined with shade trees, large, paved areas are visually divided and screened, and buffers are provided within and around the Project.
 - f. Landscaped areas shall be planted with drought-tolerant species which do not require any automatic irrigation systems.
 - g. Plantings shall include species that are native or adapted to the region. Plants on the Massachusetts Prohibited Plant List and Invasive Plant List, as may be amended, shall be prohibited.
 - h. Lighting shall comply with Dark Sky standards and provide illumination necessary for safety and convenience while preventing glare and overspill to adjoining properties and reducing the amount of skyglow. The color temperature of exterior lighting shall not exceed 3000 Kelvin.

Parking and circulation on the site shall be organized to reduce the amount of impervious surface.

2. Building Siting
 - a. There shall be a landscaped buffer between buildings or structures and properties adjacent to the MCMOD;
 - b. Buildings shall be oriented to any adjacent usable open space, with access to the building onto or accessible to the usable open space;
 - c. Structures shall be oriented to provide pedestrian entrances to any adjoining sidewalks
 - d. Trash collection and dumpsters shall be located in appropriate areas and screened to avoid adverse impacts on properties adjacent to the MCMOD
 - e. Project shall minimize the visual impact of the development from the street by locating lower buildings closest to the street frontage and taller buildings in the interior of the parcels.
3. Building Design Features
 - a. Architecture shall demonstrate the cohesive planning of the development and present a clearly identifiable design feature throughout. It is not intended that buildings be totally uniform in appearance or that designers and developers be restricted in their creativity. The following standards shall apply:
 - b. To reduce a building's perceived mass, building facades shall be divided into smaller scale horizontal and vertical components, through use of changes in plane and changes in color, material, and texture.
 - c. For multi-family buildings of three or more stories, building design shall maintain a distinction between upper and lower floors. Primary building entrances shall be accentuated. Design features can include covered porches, porticos, and other pronounced architectural forms.

- d. Buildings with pitched roofs shall have a pitch between 5:12 and 12:12.
- e. Side and rear facades shall be generally consistent with the primary facade's architectural style.
- f. Accessory buildings shall be in the same style as the primary building(s).
- g. Mechanical equipment at grade, attached to, or on the rooftops shall be screened from view or made an integral part of the overall design of the building.
- h. All utility, service, loading, and trash collection areas shall be screened or enclosed by plantings, walls, or solid fencing, or a combination thereof. Enclosures shall be designed to be compatible with the architecture of the adjacent building.
- i. Materials such as brick, stone, wood clapboard, and cementitious siding such as Hardi-plank shall be used for siding, particularly where visible at the pedestrian level.
- j. Architectural asphalt shingles are preferred for buildings with pitched roofs.

4. Circulation and Walkability

- a. Development shall be made pedestrian-friendly by use of amenities such as wide sidewalks/pathways, outdoor seating, and/or appropriate landscaping. Structures, parking, pathways and other pedestrian amenities shall be accessible by people with disabilities and designed to maximize ease of pedestrian access. Bicycle features shall include bike racks and be designed to provide pathways connecting to any existing and proposed bicycle routes.
- b. A paved pedestrian network shall connect parking to the entries to all buildings and the buildings to each other.

G. Affordable Component

MCMODDs shall provide affordable units as follows:

- 1. 10 (ten) percent of the units in an MCMODD shall be affordable units.
- 2. Affordable Units shall be dispersed throughout the project. The Affordable Units shall be indistinguishable in external appearance from any market-rate housing units in the MCMODD.
- 3. In computing this requirement, the total number of dwelling units shall be used.

4. Amend Section 218-2.5 Site Plan Review By inserting a new subsection (e) under Section 218-2.5.C.(2) Threshold of Review Major Project to read as follows:

“(e) MCMODD pursuant to Section 218-7.5”

5. Amend Section 218-6.2 Schedule of Intensity Regulations Notes #1. By adding the following at the end of the note:

“For MBTA Communities Multi-Family Overlay District Development see **Section 218-7.5**”

6. Amend the Groton Zoning Bylaw by deleting the words “ Department of Housing and Community Development” and “DHCD” wherever they appear and inserting the following words in their place respectively, “Executive Office of Housing and Liveable Communities” and “EOHLC”

7. Amend the Zoning Map of Groton by establishing the Multi Family Development Overlay District (MCMOD).

The zoning map of the Town of Groton is hereby amended by designating the following properties to be included in the Multi Family Development Overlay District:

Assessors Map Address & Parcel	Area	Owner
216-94 Main Street	2.04 acres	500MG LLC
216-95 Main Street	25.42 acres	500MG LLC

216-96	Main Street	9.32acres	500MG LLC
216-12	Main Street	5.2 acres	Groton Residential Gardens
216-98	Main Street	1.2 acres	Quality Green Homes LLC
216-99	Main Street	3.36 acres	Quality Green Homes LLC
216-99.1	Main Street	0.94 acres	Quality Green Homes LLC
216-29	Main Street	0.957 acres	445 Main Street Realty LLC

or to take any other action relative thereto.

Planning Board

Select Board:

Finance Committee: No Position

Planning Board

Summary: *This article proposes to create a zoning overlay district in which multi-family developments may be allowed “as of right” at a maximum density of 15 units per acre. The parcels on Main Street identified for inclusion in the overlay district are zoned General Business (GB) and are located within the sewer district. The existing zoning of the parcels included in the overlay district will remain unchanged. The purpose of this article is to implement zoning reform as required by M.G.L. Ch. 40A, Section 3A, a.k.a. the MBTA Communities Zoning Law (the “Law”). The Law was enacted to address the acute need for housing in Massachusetts. The Law requires MBTA Communities, including Groton, to adopt local zoning that provides at least one zoning district of reasonable size in which multi-family housing is allowed “as of right” at a minimum gross density of 15 units per acre.*

Article 18: 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 218-5.2 Schedule of Use Regulations by amending the entry under Accessory Uses “Accessory Apartment as regulated under Section 218-9.4” by deleting the “N” use entries under the “NB, VCB, and GB” columns and inserting “Y” in their place and by deleting the “N” use entries under the R-A, R-B, NB, VCB, and GB columns so it reads as follows:

	R-A	R-B	NB	VCB	GB	I	P	O
Accessory Dwelling Unit	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N
More than One Accessory Dwelling Unit	PB	PB	PB	PB	PB	N	N	N

2. Amend Section 218-9.4.1 Purpose, by deleting the words “in the RA and RB Districts” in subsection a., so it reads as follows:

“a. To provide homeowners of a single-family dwelling 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.”

3. Amend Section 218-9.4.2 Attached accessory dwelling unit in the second paragraph by deleting the words “RA and RB” and replacing them with the words “RA, RB, NB, VCB, and GB”, so it reads as follows:

“No more than one accessory dwelling unit shall be allowed as of right on a lot in the RA, RB, NB, VCB, and GB Districts providing the following criteria are met:”

4. Amend Section 218-9.4.3 Detached accessory dwelling unit in the first paragraph by deleting the words “R-A or R-B Districts subject to Site Plan Review” and inserting in their place the following words “R-A, R-B, NB, VCB, and GB Districts subject to Minor Site Plan Review” so it reads as follows:

"A Building Permit for 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, R-B, NB, VCB, and GB Districts shall be subject to Minor Site Plan Review pursuant to § 218-2.5 provided the following criteria are met:"

5. **Amend Section 218-9-.4.3.g.** by deleting the first paragraph in its entirety and insert the following in its place,

"The approval for Minor Site Plan review for a Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit shall include the following findings:"

or take any action relative thereto.

Planning Board

Select Board:

Finance Committee: *No Position*

Planning Board:

Summary: *The purpose of this article is to make additional amendments to the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) provisions of the zoning bylaw to be fully consistent with the ADU regulations of the Affordable Homes Act. These additional amendments were recommended by the Attorney General's Office and Groton's Town Counsel.*

Article 19: *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: *No Position*

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

ARTICLES 20 THROUGH 29 WILL BE PART OF THE CONSENT AGENDA. PLEASE SEE EXPLANATION PROVIDED ON PAGE 2 OF THIS WARRANT.

Article 20: Funding for the Destination Groton Committee

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 in Fiscal Year 2026 and thereafter, for the purpose of providing funding for the Destination Groton Committee to carry out the Charge of the Committee, and all costs associated and related thereto, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Destination Groton Committee

Select Board:

Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Summary: *The purpose of this Article is to provide \$15,000 in funding for the Destination Groton Committee to carry out its charge, which is to pursue a course of action intended to engage all Town stakeholders, including the business and non-profit communities, Town leaders, Federal and State elected officials and Town residents in a series of public information forums, economic research and data analysis, in order to, through a ten-year Town Center Strategic Vision Plan, prepare for an increase in visitors to town while at the same time work to preserve its rural small-town charm. The purpose of this request is to meet a state required minimum local Town expenditure of \$15,000 in a prior fiscal year in order to qualify for major matching grants in Destination Development, Historic Preservation, Infrastructure, and Cultural programs that promote Groton to meet the needs of increased visitors. A portion of this funding will be used to set aside local match opportunities and to produce a Groton Public Engagement Vision Forum and the second Regional Tourism Conference to promote Groton as a gateway for the region.*

Article 21: 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 Department Operating Budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Board of Water Commissioners

Select Board:

Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Summary: *This article allows the Water Department to transfer money from its surplus account to cover any deficit in the Fiscal Year 2025 Water Department Budget. As of the printing of the Warrant, it is anticipated that \$ __, __ will need to be transferred for this purpose.*

Article 22: *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: *Recommended Unanimously*

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. As of the printing of the Warrant, it is anticipated that \$____ will need to be transferred for this purpose.*

Article 23: *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 2025 Four Corners Sewer Enterprise Department Budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Board of Sewer Commissioners

Select Board:

Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

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. As of the printing of the Warrant, it is anticipated that \$____ will need to be transferred for this purpose.*

Article 24: *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: *Recommendation Deferred Until Town Meeting*

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.*

Article 25: *Appropriate Money to Offset the Snow and Ice Deficit*

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, and/or borrow a sum or sums of money, to be expended by the Town Manager, to reduce the deficit in the Fiscal Year 2025 Snow and Ice Budget, as approved under Article 5 of the May 18, 2024 Special Town Meeting, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Select Board:

Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Summary: *This article will allow the Town to fund any deficit in the Snow and Ice Account in FY 25.*

Article 26: *Debt Service for Middle School Track*

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds, a 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: *Recommended Unanimously*

Summary: *This Article appropriates the debt service payment for the Middle School Track Project. Article 7 of the May 21, 2021 Spring Town Meeting appropriated \$1,405,374 for the project. In FY 2026, the Community Preservation Committee will pay \$202,467 in debt service (\$169,702 in principal payment and \$32,765 in interest payment) for this appropriation. To fund this appropriation the entire amount will come from the Unallocated Reserve.*

Article 27: *Transfer Bond Proceeds*

To see if the Town will vote to transfer the excess bond proceeds of \$24,530.27 from the \$1,131,041 borrowing authorized under Article 8 of the April 29, 2019 Spring Town Meeting for the Library Roof, pursuant to M.G.L., c. 44, §20 to the Florence Roche Elementary School Construction Project as authorized under Article 8 of the May 1, 2021 Spring Town Meeting, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Assistant Director of Finance/Town Accountant

Select Board:

Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Summary: *The purpose of this Article is to transfer the remaining funds for the Library Roof Project to the Florence Roche Elementary School Construction Project as they are no longer needed for the Library Roof and can be used to reduce the final borrowing for the Elementary School Project.*

Article 28: Establishing Limits for the Various Revolving Funds

To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c. 44 sec 53E½ and the Revolving Fund Bylaw, to amend the Revolving Fund Bylaw to add or delete any revolving account and/or to set the FY 2025 spending limits for the various revolving funds as follows:

Program or Purpose	FY 2026 Spending Limit
Stormwater Management	\$20,000
Conservation Commission	\$50,000
Building Rental Fund	\$50,000
Affordable Housing Marketing	\$20,000
Home Recycling Equipment	\$10,000
Access for Persons with Disabilities	\$10,000
Council on Aging Program Fund	\$40,000
Boat Excise Tax Fund	\$ 5,000
Transfer Station Glass	\$20,000
Senior Center Fitness Equipment	\$10,000

or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Select Board:

Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Summary: *This Article sets the limit of annual spending for the various revolving funds authorized by previous Town Meeting votes and is currently set forth in the Town's Bylaw for said purpose.*

Article 29: Repair Sprinkler System at Town Hall

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 in Fiscal Year 2025 and thereafter, to pay for repairs to the Sprinkler System at Town Hall, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Select Board:

Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Summary: *The sprinkler system at the Town Hall is a dry system. When it is tested, water is put into the system and then removed. Unfortunately, remnants of water is left in the piping causing it to rust. The original system was installed when the Town Hall was renovated in 1999. Repairs were put out to bid and the low bid came in at \$118,500. This Article will seek a transfer from Free Cash to pay for the repairs.*

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 7th Day of April in the year of our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Five.

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

**BUDGET MESSAGE FROM THE
TOWN MANAGER
AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**TOWN OF GROTON
FISCAL YEAR 2026**

**TOWN OF GROTON
FISCAL YEAR 2026
REVENUE ESTIMATES**

	BUDGETED FY 2025		ESTIMATED FY 2025		CHANGE
PROPERTY TAX REVENUE	\$ 38,052,807	\$	39,317,497	\$	1,264,690
DEBT EXCLUSIONS	\$ 4,773,475	\$	5,258,050	\$	484,575
CHERRY SHEET - STATE AID	\$ 1,152,082	\$	1,192,703	\$	40,621
UNEXPENDED TAX CAPACITY	\$ 82,556	\$	-	\$	(82,556)
LOCAL RECEIPTS:					
General Revenue:					
Motor Vehicle Excise Taxes	\$ 1,820,583	\$	1,860,000	\$	39,417
Meals Tax and Room Occupancy Tax	\$ 400,000	\$	425,000	\$	25,000
Marijuana Revenue	\$ 9,000	\$	15,000	\$	6,000
Penalties & Interest on Taxes	\$ 110,000	\$	110,000	\$	-
Payments in Lieu of Taxes	\$ 395,443	\$	415,156	\$	19,713
Other Charges for Services	\$ 15,000	\$	15,300	\$	300
Fees	\$ 400,000	\$	400,000	\$	-
Rentals	\$ 55,000	\$	58,000	\$	3,000
Library Revenues	\$ -	\$	-	\$	-
Other Departmental Revenue	\$ 854,063	\$	582,372	\$	(271,691)
Licenses and Permits	\$ 429,300	\$	450,000	\$	20,700
Fines and Forfeits	\$ 10,000	\$	10,000	\$	-
Investment Income	\$ 309,744	\$	258,499	\$	(51,245)
Recreation Revenues	\$ 750,000	\$	875,000	\$	125,000
Miscellaneous Recurring	\$ 94,000	\$	94,000	\$	-
Sub-total - General Revenue	\$ 5,652,133	\$	5,568,327	\$	(83,806)
Other Revenue:					
Free Cash	\$ 655,733	\$	603,855	\$	(51,878)
Capital Stabilization Fund for GDRSD	\$ 295,767	\$	-	\$	(295,767)
Stabilization Fund for Tax Rate Relief	\$ -	\$	-	\$	-
Capital Asset Stabilization Fund	\$ 683,500	\$	819,435	\$	135,935
EMS/Conservation Fund Receipts Reserve	\$ 350,501	\$	530,614	\$	180,113
Community Preservation Funds	\$ -	\$	-	\$	-
Water Department Surplus	\$ -	\$	-	\$	-
Sewer Department Surplus	\$ -	\$	-	\$	-
Insurance Reimbursements	\$ -	\$	-	\$	-
Bond Surplus Transfer	\$ -	\$	-	\$	-
Local Access Cable Fund	\$ -	\$	130,000	\$	130,000
Sub-total - Other Revenue	\$ 1,985,501	\$	2,083,904	\$	98,403
WATER DEPARTMENT ENTERPRISE	\$ 2,310,266	\$	2,050,485	\$	(259,781)
SEWER DEPARTMENT ENTERPRISE	\$ 1,250,475	\$	940,908	\$	(309,567)
FOUR CORNER SEWER ENTERPRISE	\$ 98,040	\$	310,812	\$	212,772
STORMWATER UTILITY ENTERPRISE	\$ 247,851	\$	249,890	\$	2,040
TOTAL ESTIMATED REVENUE	\$ 55,605,186	\$	56,972,576	\$	1,367,390

**TOWN OF GROTON
FISCAL YEAR 2026
TAX LEVY CALCULATIONS**

FY 2026 PROPOSED EXPENDITURES

FINANCE COMMITTEE - Proposed Budget

General Government	\$	2,565,835
Land Use Departments	\$	549,503
Protection of Persons and Property	\$	4,864,896
Regional School Districts	\$	29,075,470
Department of Public Works	\$	2,475,216
Library and Citizen Services	\$	2,439,509
Debt Service	\$	5,555,403
Employee Benefits	\$	4,922,406

Sub-Total - Operating Budget \$ 52,448,239

A. TOTAL DEPARTMENTAL BUDGET REQUESTS	\$	52,448,239
B. CAPITAL BUDGET REQUESTS	\$	899,435
C. ENTERPRISE FUND REQUESTS	\$	3,338,093
D. COMMUNITY PRESERVATION REQUEST		

OTHER AMOUNTS TO BE RAISED

1. Amounts certified for tax title purposes	\$	-
2. Debt and interest charges not included	\$	-
3. Final court judgments	\$	-
4. Total Overlay deficits of prior years	\$	-
5. Total cherry sheet offsets	\$	32,311
6. Revenue deficits	\$	-
7. Offset Receipts	\$	-
8. Authorized deferral of Teachers' Pay	\$	-
9. Snow and Ice deficit	\$	-
10. Other	\$	-
E. TOTAL OTHER AMOUNTS TO BE RAISED	\$	32,311
F. STATE AND COUNTY CHERRY SHEET CHARGES	\$	104,498
G. ALLOWANCE FOR ABATEMENTS AND EXEMPTIONS	\$	150,000

TOTAL PROPOSED EXPENDITURES \$ 56,972,576

FY 2026 ESTIMATED RECEIPTS

ESTIMATED TAX LEVY

Levy Limit	\$	39,317,497
Debt Exclusion	\$	5,258,050

A. ESTIMATED TAX LEVY	\$	44,575,547
B. CHERRY SHEET ESTIMATED RECEIPTS	\$	1,192,703
C. LOCAL RECEIPTS NOT ALLOCATED	\$	5,568,327
D. OFFSET RECEIPTS	\$	-
E. ENTERPRISE FUNDS	\$	3,552,095
F. COMMUNITY PRESERVATION FUNDS	\$	-
G. FREE CASH	\$	603,855

OTHER AVAILABLE FUNDS

1. Stabilization Fund	\$	-
2. Capital Asset Fund	\$	819,435
3. GDRSD Capital Asset Fund	\$	-
4. EMS/Conservation Fund	\$	530,614
5. Bond Surplus Transfer	\$	-
6. Local Access Cable RRFA	\$	130,000

H. OTHER AVAILABLE FUNDS \$ 1,480,049

TOTAL ESTIMATED RECEIPTS \$ 56,972,576

FY 2026 SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) \$ (0)

APPENDIX A

TOWN OF GROTON

FISCAL YEAR 2026

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
<u>GENERAL GOVERNMENT</u>							
MODERATOR							
1000	Salaries	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	0.21	0.00%
1001	Expenses	\$ -	\$ 80	\$ 80	\$ 80	0.02	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 1,000	\$ 1,080	\$ 1,080	\$ 1,080	0.22	0.00%
BOARD OF SELECTMEN							
1020	Salaries	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1021	Wages	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1022	Expenses	\$ 3,109	\$ 35,300	\$ 4,750	\$ 4,750	0.99	0.01%
1023	Engineering/Consultant	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1024	Minor Capital	\$ 24,054	\$ 24,054	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 27,163	\$ 59,354	\$ 4,750	\$ 4,750	0.99	0.01%
TOWN MANAGER							
1030	Salaries	\$ 252,037	\$ 258,863	\$ 295,327	\$ 295,327	61.51	0.55%
1031	Wages	\$ 111,472	\$ 141,837	\$ 107,625	\$ 107,625	22.41	0.20%
1032	Expenses	\$ 14,534	\$ 20,200	\$ 12,100	\$ 12,100	2.52	0.02%
1033	Engineering/Consultant	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1034	Performance Evaluations	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 378,043	\$ 420,900	\$ 415,052	\$ 415,052	86.44	0.77%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
FINANCE COMMITTEE							
1040	Expenses	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1041	Reserve Fund	\$ 39,500	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	31.24	0.28%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 39,500	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	31.24	0.28%
TOWN ACCOUNTANT							
1050	Salaries	\$ 115,615	\$ 118,163	\$ 125,885	\$ 125,885	26.22	0.23%
1051	Wages	\$ 54,285	\$ 56,679	\$ 79,344	\$ 79,344	16.52	0.15%
1052	Expenses	\$ 36,770	\$ 50,523	\$ 83,633	\$ 83,633	17.42	0.16%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 206,670	\$ 225,365	\$ 288,862	\$ 288,862	60.16	0.54%
BOARD OF ASSESSORS							
1060	Salaries	\$ 94,300	\$ 96,186	\$ 105,500	\$ 105,500	21.97	0.20%
1061	Wages	\$ 66,873	\$ 75,272	\$ 80,460	\$ 80,460	16.76	0.15%
1062	Expenses	\$ 45,336	\$ 47,032	\$ 61,579	\$ 61,579	12.82	0.11%
1063	Legal Expense	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 206,509	\$ 218,490	\$ 247,539	\$ 247,539	51.55	0.46%
TREASURER/TAX COLLECTOR							
1070	Salaries	\$ 150,769	\$ 153,977	\$ 166,060	\$ 166,060	34.58	0.31%
1071	Wages	\$ 79,296	\$ 82,940	\$ 81,418	\$ 81,418	16.96	0.15%
1072	Expenses	\$ 26,086	\$ 28,637	\$ 28,020	\$ 28,020	5.84	0.05%
1073	Tax Title	\$ 260	\$ 7,100	\$ 7,100	\$ 7,100	1.48	0.01%
1074	Bond Cost	\$ 500	\$ 2,300	\$ 2,300	\$ 2,300	0.48	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 256,911	\$ 274,954	\$ 284,898	\$ 284,898	59.33	0.53%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
TOWN COUNSEL							
1080	Expenses	\$ 95,387	\$ 130,000	\$ 90,000	\$ 90,000	18.74	0.17%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 95,387	\$ 130,000	\$ 90,000	\$ 90,000	18.74	0.17%
HUMAN RESOURCES							
1090	Salary	\$ 95,050	\$ 96,936	\$ 102,549	\$ 102,549	21.36	0.19%
1091	Expenses	\$ 18,674	\$ 12,400	\$ 14,400	\$ 14,400	3.00	0.03%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 113,724	\$ 109,336	\$ 116,949	\$ 116,949	24.36	0.22%
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY							
1100	Salary	\$ 121,627	\$ 124,810	\$ 131,977	\$ 131,977	27.49	0.25%
1101	Wages	\$ 70,342	\$ 73,459	\$ 77,173	\$ 77,173	16.07	0.14%
1102	Expenses	\$ 24,588	\$ 24,800	\$ 24,800	\$ 24,800	5.16	0.05%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 216,557	\$ 223,069	\$ 233,950	\$ 233,950	48.72	0.44%
GIS STEERING COMMITTEE							
1120	Expenses	\$ 8,300	\$ 8,300	\$ 8,300	\$ 8,300	1.73	0.02%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 8,300	\$ 8,300	\$ 8,300	\$ 8,300	1.73	0.02%
TOWN CLERK							
1130	Salaries	\$ 98,472	\$ 98,591	\$ 105,856	\$ 105,856	22.05	0.20%
1131	Wages	\$ 76,606	\$ 81,040	\$ 80,642	\$ 80,642	16.79	0.15%
1132	Expenses	\$ 11,860	\$ 13,900	\$ 13,200	\$ 13,200	2.75	0.02%
1135	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 186,938	\$ 193,531	\$ 199,698	\$ 199,698	41.59	0.37%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
ELECTIONS & BOARD OF REGISTRARS							
1140	Stipend	\$ 17,385	\$ 33,053	\$ 5,933	\$ 5,933	1.24	0.01%
1141	Expenses	\$ 23,119	\$ 21,088	\$ 16,124	\$ 16,124	3.36	0.03%
1142	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 40,504	\$ 54,141	\$ 22,057	\$ 22,057	4.59	0.04%
STREET LISTINGS							
1150	Expenses	\$ 5,698	\$ 5,950	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,200	1.50	0.01%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 5,698	\$ 5,950	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,200	1.50	0.01%
INSURANCE & BONDING							
1160	Insurance & Bonding	\$ 310,032	\$ 350,000	\$ 350,000	\$ 350,000	72.89	0.65%
1161	Insurance Deductible Reserve - Liability	\$ 11,499	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000	2.50	0.02%
1162	Insurance Deductible Reserve - 111F	\$ 1,238	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	5.21	0.05%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 322,769	\$ 387,000	\$ 387,000	\$ 387,000	80.60	0.72%
TOWN REPORT							
1170	Expenses	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	0.31	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	0.31	0.00%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
POSTAGE/TOWN HALL EXPENSES							
1180	Expenses	\$ 77,241	\$ 65,000	\$ 60,000	\$ 60,000	12.50	0.11%
1181	Telephone Expenses	\$ 23,494	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	6.25	0.06%
1182	Office Supplies	\$ 17,793	\$ 17,000	\$ 17,000	\$ 17,000	3.54	0.03%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 118,528	\$ 112,000	\$ 107,000	\$ 107,000	22.28	0.20%
TOTAL GENERAL GOVERNMENT		\$ 2,225,701	\$ 2,574,970	\$ 2,565,835	\$ 2,565,835	534.36	4.78%

LAND USE DEPARTMENTS

CONSERVATION COMMISSION							
1200	Salary	\$ 70,533	\$ 79,070	\$ 85,565	\$ 85,565	17.82	0.16%
1201	Wages	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1202	Expenses	\$ 8,749	\$ 8,270	\$ 8,270	\$ 8,270	1.72	0.02%
1203	Engineering & Legal	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1204	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 79,282	\$ 87,340	\$ 93,835	\$ 93,835	19.54	0.17%
PLANNING BOARD							
1210	Salaries	\$ 95,171	\$ 97,696	\$ 103,222	\$ 103,222	21.50	0.19%
1211	Wages	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1212	Expenses	\$ 9,309	\$ 9,625	\$ 9,625	\$ 9,625	2.00	0.02%
1215	M.R.P.C. Assessment	\$ 3,942	\$ 4,041	\$ 4,142	\$ 4,142	0.86	0.01%
1216	Legal Budget	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 108,422	\$ 111,362	\$ 116,989	\$ 116,989	24.36	0.22%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS							
1220	Wages	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1221	Expenses	\$ 558	\$ 1,335	\$ 1,335	\$ 1,335	0.28	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 558	\$ 1,335	\$ 1,335	\$ 1,335	0.28	0.00%
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION							
1230	Wages	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1231	Expenses	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
BUILDING INSPECTOR							
1240	Salaries	\$ 105,059	\$ 107,030	\$ 113,370	\$ 113,370	23.61	0.21%
1241	Wages	\$ 62,238	\$ 63,935	\$ 67,500	\$ 67,500	14.06	0.13%
1242	Expenses	\$ 27,711	\$ 24,897	\$ 24,897	\$ 24,897	5.19	0.05%
1243	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 195,008	\$ 195,862	\$ 205,767	\$ 205,767	42.85	0.38%
MECHANICAL INSPECTOR							
1250	Fee Salaries	\$ 43,360	\$ 39,000	\$ 39,000	\$ 39,000	8.12	0.07%
1251	Expenses	\$ 3,107	\$ 3,500	\$ 3,500	\$ 3,500	0.73	0.01%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 46,467	\$ 42,500	\$ 42,500	\$ 42,500	8.85	0.08%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
EARTH REMOVAL INSPECTOR							
1260	Stipend	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	0.52	0.00%
1261	Expenses	\$ -	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300	0.06	0.00%
1262	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 2,500	\$ 2,800	\$ 2,800	\$ 2,800	0.58	0.01%
BOARD OF HEALTH							
1270	Wages	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1271	Expenses	\$ 877	\$ 1,575	\$ 1,575	\$ 1,575	0.33	0.00%
1272	Nursing Services	\$ -	\$ 17,798	\$ 21,047	\$ 21,047	4.38	0.04%
1273	Nashoba Health District	\$ 55,345	\$ 43,081	\$ 45,921	\$ 45,921	9.56	0.09%
1274	Herbert Lipton MH	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1275	Eng/Consult/Landfill Monitoring	\$ 9,433	\$ 13,834	\$ 13,834	\$ 13,834	2.88	0.03%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 65,655	\$ 76,288	\$ 82,377	\$ 82,377	17.16	0.15%
SEALER OF WEIGHTS & MEASURES							
1280	Fee Salaries	\$ 300	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1281	Expenses	\$ -	\$ 3,262	\$ 3,900	\$ 3,900	0.81	0.01%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 300	\$ 3,262	\$ 3,900	\$ 3,900	0.81	0.01%
TOTAL LAND USE DEPARTMENTS		\$ 498,192	\$ 520,749	\$ 549,503	\$ 549,503	114.44	1.02%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
<u>PROTECTION OF PERSONS AND PROPERTY</u>							
POLICE DEPARTMENT							
1300	Salaries	\$ 291,224	\$ 305,889	\$ 342,265	\$ 342,265	71.28	0.64%
1301	Wages	\$ 1,957,470	\$ 2,222,071	\$ 2,305,558	\$ 2,305,558	480.16	4.30%
1302	Expenses	\$ 195,295	\$ 270,952	\$ 269,900	\$ 269,900	56.21	0.50%
1303	Lease or Purchase of Cruisers	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1304	PS Building (Expenses)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1305	Minor Capital	\$ 6,420	\$ 12,984	\$ 26,550	\$ 26,550	5.53	0.05%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 2,455,409	\$ 2,816,896	\$ 2,944,273	\$ 2,944,273	613.18	5.49%
FIRE DEPARTMENT							
1310	Salaries	\$ 290,302	\$ 292,712	\$ 285,544	\$ 285,544	59.47	0.53%
1311	Wages	\$ 1,150,339	\$ 1,314,672	\$ 1,367,470	\$ 1,367,470	284.79	2.55%
1312	Expenses	\$ 209,902	\$ 219,571	\$ 225,646	\$ 225,646	46.99	0.42%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 1,650,543	\$ 1,826,955	\$ 1,878,659	\$ 1,878,659	391.25	3.50%
GROTON WATER FIRE PROTECTION							
1320	West Groton Water District	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1321	Groton Water Department	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
ANIMAL INSPECTOR							
1330	Salary	\$ 2,082	\$ 2,082	\$ 2,082	\$ 2,082	0.43	0.00%
1331	Expenses	\$ 266	\$ 400	\$ 400	\$ 400	0.08	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 2,348	\$ 2,482	\$ 2,482	\$ 2,482	0.52	0.00%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER							
1340	Salary	\$ 2,082	\$ 2,082	\$ 2,082	\$ 2,082	0.43	0.00%
1341	Expenses	\$ 266	\$ 400	\$ 400	\$ 400	0.08	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 2,348	\$ 2,482	\$ 2,482	\$ 2,482	0.52	0.00%
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY							
1350	Salary	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	0.83	0.01%
1351	Expenses	\$ 40,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	2.08	0.02%
1352	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 44,000	\$ 14,000	\$ 14,000	\$ 14,000	2.92	0.03%
DOG OFFICER							
1360	Salary	\$ 15,000	\$ 17,500	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	4.17	0.04%
1361	Expenses	\$ 2,929	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	0.62	0.01%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 17,929	\$ 20,500	\$ 23,000	\$ 23,000	4.79	0.04%
POLICE & FIRE COMMUNICATIONS							
1370	Wages	\$ 455,726	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1371	Expenses	\$ 14,018	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1372	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 469,744	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
TOTAL PROTECTION OF		\$ 4,642,321	\$ 4,683,315	\$ 4,864,896	\$ 4,864,896	1,013.17	9.07%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGETS							
NASHOBA VALLEY REGIONAL TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL							
1400	Operating Expenses	\$ 762,656	\$ 966,719	\$ 908,490	\$ 908,490	189.20	1.69%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 762,656	\$ 966,719	\$ 908,490	\$ 908,490	189.20	1.69%
GROTON-DUNSTABLE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT							
1410	Operating Expenses	\$ 25,937,716	\$ 26,412,384	\$ 27,777,948	\$ 27,777,948	5,785.08	51.79%
1411	Debt Service, Excluded	\$ 406,982	\$ 384,622	\$ 110,389	\$ 110,389	22.99	0.21%
1412	Debt Service, Unexcluded	\$ 58,814	\$ 60,534	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1413	Operating Grant	\$ -	\$ 619,000	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1414	Capital Assessment	\$ 552,203	\$ 295,767	\$ 278,643	\$ 278,643	58.03	0.52%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 26,955,715	\$ 27,772,307	\$ 28,166,980	\$ 28,166,980	5,866.10	52.52%
TOTAL SCHOOLS		\$ 27,718,371	\$ 28,739,026	\$ 29,075,470	\$ 29,075,470	6,055.30	54.21%

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

1500	Salaries	\$ 120,293	\$ 122,664	\$ 179,124	\$ 179,124	37.30	0.33%
1501	Wages	\$ 731,227	\$ 753,789	\$ 773,563	\$ 773,563	161.10	1.44%
1502	Expenses	\$ 129,073	\$ 136,900	\$ 147,900	\$ 147,900	30.80	0.28%
1503	Highway Maintenance	\$ 71,282	\$ 80,000	\$ 80,000	\$ 80,000	16.66	0.15%
1504	Minor Capital	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	3.12	0.03%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 1,066,875	\$ 1,108,353	\$ 1,195,587	\$ 1,195,587	248.99	2.23%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
STREET LIGHTS							
1510	Expenses	\$ 14,598	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	3.12	0.03%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 14,598	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	3.12	0.03%
SNOW AND ICE							
1520	Expenses	\$ 153,024	\$ 165,000	\$ 165,000	\$ 165,000	34.36	0.31%
1521	Overtime	\$ 228,416	\$ 140,000	\$ 140,000	\$ 140,000	29.16	0.26%
1522	Hired Equipment	\$ 45,400	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000	7.29	0.07%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 426,840	\$ 340,000	\$ 340,000	\$ 340,000	70.81	0.63%
TREE WARDEN BUDGET							
1530	Salary	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1531	Expenses	\$ 1,773	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	0.62	0.01%
1532	Trees	\$ -	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	0.31	0.00%
1533	Tree Work	\$ 31,370	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	6.25	0.06%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 33,143	\$ 34,500	\$ 34,500	\$ 34,500	7.19	0.06%
MUNICIPAL BUILDING AND PROPERTY MAINTENANCE							
1540	Wages	\$ 138,182	\$ 162,845	\$ 170,064	\$ 170,064	35.42	0.32%
1541	Expenses	\$ 270,921	\$ 270,950	\$ 282,950	\$ 282,950	58.93	0.53%
1542	Minor Capital	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	3.12	0.03%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 434,103	\$ 458,795	\$ 468,014	\$ 468,014	97.47	0.87%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL							
1550	Wages	\$ 145,954	\$ 157,651	\$ 164,820	\$ 164,820	34.33	0.31%
1551	Expenses	\$ 38,661	\$ 45,686	\$ 45,686	\$ 45,686	9.51	0.09%
1552	Tipping Fees	\$ 139,668	\$ 145,000	\$ 145,000	\$ 145,000	30.20	0.27%
1553	North Central SW Coop	\$ 5,850	\$ 5,850	\$ 5,850	\$ 5,850	1.22	0.01%
1554	Minor Capital	\$ 4,717	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	1.04	0.01%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 334,850	\$ 359,187	\$ 366,356	\$ 366,356	76.30	0.68%
PARKS DEPARTMENT							
1560	Wages	\$ 12,664	\$ 17,922	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1561	Expenses	\$ 55,578	\$ 55,759	\$ 55,759	\$ 55,759	11.61	0.10%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 68,242	\$ 73,681	\$ 55,759	\$ 55,759	11.61	0.10%
TOTAL DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS		\$ 2,378,651	\$ 2,389,516	\$ 2,475,216	\$ 2,475,216	515.49	4.61%
LIBRARY AND CITIZEN'S SERVICES							
COUNCIL ON AGING							
1600	Salaries	\$ 148,800	\$ 162,023	\$ 176,376	\$ 176,376	36.73	0.33%
1601	Wages	\$ 45,585	\$ 55,733	\$ 70,526	\$ 70,526	14.69	0.13%
1602	Expenses	\$ 11,417	\$ 20,200	\$ 20,200	\$ 20,200	4.21	0.04%
1603	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 205,802	\$ 237,956	\$ 267,102	\$ 267,102	55.63	0.50%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
SENIOR CENTER VAN							
1610	Wages	\$ 74,885	\$ 76,611	\$ 82,100	\$ 82,100	17.10	0.15%
1611	Expenses	\$ 15,488	\$ 21,023	\$ 21,023	\$ 21,023	4.38	0.04%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 90,373	\$ 97,634	\$ 103,123	\$ 103,123	21.48	0.19%
VETERAN'S SERVICE OFFICER							
1620	Salary	\$ 6,120	\$ 6,242	\$ 6,429	\$ 6,429	1.34	0.01%
1621	Expenses	\$ 50	\$ 1,100	\$ 1,100	\$ 1,100	0.23	0.00%
1622	Veterans' Benefits	\$ 22,771	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	5.21	0.05%
1623	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENT TOTAL		\$ 28,941	\$ 32,342	\$ 32,529	\$ 32,529	6.77	0.06%
GRAVES REGISTRATION							
1630	Salary/Stipend	\$ 250	\$ 250	\$ 250	\$ 250	0.05	0.00%
1631	Expenses	\$ 750	\$ 760	\$ 1,060	\$ 1,060	0.22	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 1,000	\$ 1,010	\$ 1,310	\$ 1,310	0.27	0.00%
CARE OF VETERAN GRAVES							
1640	Contract Expenses	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	0.31	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	0.31	0.00%
OLD BURYING GROUND COMMITTEE							
1650	Expenses	\$ -	\$ 800	\$ 800	\$ 800	0.17	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ -	\$ 800	\$ 800	\$ 800	0.17	0.00%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
LIBRARY							
1660	Salary	\$ 435,562	\$ 453,631	\$ 480,538	\$ 480,538	100.08	0.90%
1661	Wages	\$ 319,135	\$ 355,706	\$ 366,043	\$ 366,043	76.23	0.68%
1662	Expenses	\$ 225,435	\$ 219,966	\$ 230,546	\$ 230,546	48.01	0.43%
1663	Minor Capital		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 980,132	\$ 1,029,303	\$ 1,077,127	\$ 1,077,127	224.32	2.01%
COMMEMORATIONS & CELEBRATIONS							
1670	Expenses	\$ 253	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	0.10	0.00%
1671	Fireworks	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 253	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	0.10	0.00%
WATER SAFETY							
1680	Wages	\$ 1,290	\$ 4,560	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	1.04	0.01%
1681	Expenses and Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ 4,683	\$ 3,950	\$ 3,950	0.82	0.01%
1682	Property Maint. & Improvements	\$ 7,108	\$ 10,900	\$ 2,400	\$ 2,400	0.50	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 8,398	\$ 20,143	\$ 11,350	\$ 11,350	2.36	0.02%
WEED MANAGEMENT							
1690	Wages	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1691	Expenses: Weed Harvester	\$ 17,666	\$ 22,000	\$ 22,000	\$ 22,000	4.58	0.04%
1692	Expenses: Great Lakes	\$ 9,965	\$ 100,885	\$ 22,385	\$ 22,385	4.66	0.04%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 27,631	\$ 122,885	\$ 44,385	\$ 44,385	9.24	0.08%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
GROTON COUNTRY CLUB							
1700	Salary	\$ 172,568	\$ 177,727	\$ 205,094	\$ 205,094	42.71	0.38%
1701	Wages	\$ 253,111	\$ 243,941	\$ 295,791	\$ 295,791	61.60	0.55%
1702	Expenses	\$ 223,824	\$ 167,774	\$ 235,885	\$ 235,885	49.13	0.44%
1703	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 649,503	\$ 589,442	\$ 736,770	\$ 736,770	153.44	1.37%
LOCAL ACCESS CABLE DEPARTMENT							
1710	Salaries	\$ -	\$ 71,048	\$ 75,511	\$ 75,511	15.73	0.14%
1711	Wages	\$ -	\$ 61,219	\$ 68,232	\$ 68,232	14.21	0.13%
1712	Expenses	\$ -	\$ 18,175	\$ 14,270	\$ 14,270	2.97	0.03%
1713	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	1.04	0.01%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ -	\$ 155,442	\$ 163,013	\$ 163,013	33.95	0.30%
TOTAL LIBRARY AND CITIZEN SERVICES		\$ 1,993,533	\$ 2,288,957	\$ 2,439,509	\$ 2,439,509	508.06	4.55%
DEBT SERVICE							
DEBT SERVICE							
2000	Long Term Debt - Principal Excluded	\$ 2,023,506	\$ 2,025,000	\$ 2,045,000	\$ 2,045,000	425.89	3.81%
2001	Long Term Debt - Principal Non-Excluded	\$ -	\$ 160,000	\$ 165,000	\$ 165,000	34.36	0.31%
2002	Long Term Debt - Interest - Excluded	\$ 1,493,326	\$ 1,340,252	\$ 1,258,527	\$ 1,258,527	262.10	2.35%
2003	Long Term Debt - Interest - Non-Excluded	\$ -	\$ 106,974	\$ 97,144	\$ 97,144	20.23	0.18%
		\$ -					
2004	Short Term Debt - Principal - Town	\$ -	\$ 247,532	\$ 122,685	\$ 122,685	25.55	0.23%
2005A	Short Term Debt - Interest - Non Excluded	\$ -	\$ 24,483	\$ 21,851	\$ 21,851	4.55	0.04%
2005B	Short Term Debt - Interest - Excluded	\$ 1,045,344	\$ 1,028,211	\$ 1,845,196	\$ 1,845,196	384.28	3.44%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 4,562,176	\$ 4,932,452	\$ 5,555,403	\$ 5,555,403	1,156.98	10.36%
TOTAL DEBT SERVICE		\$ 4,562,176	\$ 4,932,452	\$ 5,555,403	\$ 5,555,403	1,156.98	10.36%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS							
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS							
GENERAL BENEFITS							
3000	County Retirement	\$ 2,494,280	\$ 2,653,019	\$ 2,640,116	\$ 2,640,116	549.83	4.92%
3001	State Retirement	\$ 185,000	\$ 190,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	41.65	0.37%
3002	Unemployment Compensation	\$ 678	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	2.08	0.02%
INSURANCE							
3010	Health Insurance/Employee Expenses	\$ 2,017,056	\$ 2,185,497	\$ 1,906,470	\$ 1,906,470	397.04	3.55%
3011	Life Insurance	\$ 3,627	\$ 3,820	\$ 3,820	\$ 3,820	0.80	0.01%
3012	Medicare/Social Security	\$ 154,288	\$ 157,000	\$ 162,000	\$ 162,000	33.74	0.30%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 4,854,929	\$ 5,199,336	\$ 4,922,406	\$ 4,922,406	1,025.15	9.18%
TOTAL EMPLOYEE BENEFITS		\$ 4,854,929	\$ 5,199,336	\$ 4,922,406	\$ 4,922,406	1,025.15	9.18%
ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS							
ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS							
	Capital Budget Request	\$ 800,142	\$ 862,144	\$ 899,435	\$ 899,435	187.32	1.68%
	Offset Reciepts	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
	Cherry Sheet Offsets	\$ 29,051	\$ 32,678	\$ 32,311	\$ 32,311	6.73	0.06%
	Snow and Ice Deficit	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
	State and County Charges	\$ 98,662	\$ 101,446	\$ 104,498	\$ 104,498	21.76	0.19%
	Allowance for Abatements/Exemptions	\$ 151,515	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	31.24	0.28%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 1,079,370	\$ 1,146,268	\$ 1,186,244	\$ 1,186,244	247.05	2.21%
GRAND TOTAL - TOWN BUDGET		\$ 49,953,244	\$ 52,474,589	\$ 53,634,483	\$ 53,634,483	11,170	100.00%

Contingent Budget - Additional Requested Amount for Override Questions To Be Held at Annual Town Election on Tuesday, May 20, 2025

Question #1 - Additional Funding for Groton Dunstable Regional School District Assessment

<u>Line</u>	<u>Department/Description</u>	FY 2026		FY 2026		Impact on	
		Proposed	Additional	Proposed	Additional	Average	
		Within	Amount	With	Tax Rate	Tax Bill	
		<u>Levy</u>	<u>Requested</u>	<u>Override</u>	<u>Impact</u>		
1410	GDRSD Operating Assessment	\$ 27,777,948	\$ 673,250	\$ 28,451,198	\$ 0.25	\$	177
	Total	\$ 27,777,948	\$ 673,250	\$ 28,451,198	\$ 0.25	\$	177

Question #2 - Additional Funding to Add Six (6) Firefighters to the Groton Fire Department

1311	Fire Department Wages	\$ 1,367,470	\$ 446,704	\$ 1,814,174	\$ 0.16	\$	113
1312	Fire Department Expenses	\$ 225,646	\$ 34,200	\$ 259,846	\$ 0.01	\$	7
3010	Health Insurance/Employee Expenses	\$ 1,906,470	\$ 150,000	\$ 2,056,470	\$ 0.05	\$	35
	Total	\$ 3,499,586	\$ 630,904	\$ 4,130,490	\$ 0.22	\$	156

Town of Groton
Select Board
173 Main Street
Groton, MA 01450

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**Town of Groton
(SEIU) Highway/Transfer Station/Water Employees
Tentative Agreement**

Based on a negotiation session held on February 4, 2025, the Town of Groton and SEIU, Local 888, Highway/Transfer Station/Water Employees have tentatively agreed to the following:

1. Article VII – Wages, Section 1

The Town and Union agree to amend Article VII – Wages, Section 1 to read as follows:

Section 1. The following Wage Increase Adjustment percentages will apply (attached pay scale):

3% wage increase July 1, 2025
3% wage increase July 1, 2026
3% wage increase July 1, 2027

Prior to September, 2025 (or at a future date mutually agreed to by the Town and Union), the Town and Union agree to open this Agreement and meet to review the results of the Pay and Salary Classification Study conducted by the Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management, University of Massachusetts Boston to determine if any adjustments to the current salary schedule are to be considered. Any changes shall be mutually agreed to by the Town and the Union. Any agreed to adjustments requiring additional pay shall be subject to the availability of funds and appropriation by the Groton Town Meeting and will be retroactive to July 1, 2025.

2. Article VII – Wages, Section 2

The Town and Union agree to Amend Article VII – Wages, Section 2 to read as follows:

Section 2. New employees hired to fill a vacancy covered under this Agreement shall be given a one (1) year probationary appointment to the position at the applicable rate of pay. The town may reduce the initial probationary period by six-months at the Town's sole discretion. All promotions for existing employees covered under this agreement shall be given a six-month probationary appointment to the position at the applicable rate of pay. If it is determined by the Employer, during any probationary period covered under this Agreement that the employee is not qualified to perform the work, said employee maybe returned to their previous position and new employees shall be terminated as such. The Town reserves the right to extend any probationary period beyond the periods described above by notifying the Union in writing within the thirty (30) calendar days of the end of said probationary period.

3. Previous MOA Dated November 2, 2023 – Article VIII – Overtime, Section 1

The Town and Union agreed on November 2, 2023 to amend the second paragraph of Article VIII, Section 1, to read as follows:

Scheduled overtime for the Water Department for all weekend and holiday plant operations shall be paid at a three (3) hour minimum on Saturdays and a three (3) hour minimum on Sundays and Holidays, however the following three (3) holidays shall be paid at double time rate for the three (3) hour minimum: Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day.

4. Article VIII – Overtime, Section 3. Winter Sanding & Plowing Guidelines

The Town and Union agree to Amend Article VIII, Section 3. Winter Sanding & Plowing Guidelines, third paragraph to read as follows:

Sanding Operations will be on a rotating basis as determined by the DPW Director. Effective July 1, 2025, the rate of compensation for Emergency Stand-by sanding operations shall be \$220.00 per week; effective July 1, 2026, this rate shall be \$230 per week; effective July 1, 2027, this rate shall be \$235. Employees who are not engaged in the Sanding Operations rotation shall remain on a call back basis for storms that require the plowing of snow or other duties/operations that may be required. Any employee who does not adhere to this guideline will be subject to disciplinary procedures. Effective July 1, 2025, the rate of compensation for emergency stand-by for plow operations shall be \$170 per week; effective July 1, 2026, this rate shall be \$180 per week; effective July 1, 2027, this rate shall be \$185.

5. Article IX – Emergency On-Call Pay – Water Department, Section 2

The Town and Union agree to Amend Article IX – Emergency On-Call Pay – Water Department, Section 2 to read as follows:

Section 2. Effective July 1, 2025, the rate of Compensation for the Emergency On-Call Pay for the Water Department shall be \$625 with a minimum call out of two (2) hours; effective July 1, 2026, this rate shall be \$635 per week; effective July 1, 2027, this rate shall be \$640. Should the employees be required to work beyond two (2) hours, they shall receive another two (2) hours of compensation, and then one (1) hour increments thereafter. Overtime pay shall not be paid during the employee's regular scheduled work day.

6. Article IX – Emergency On-Call Pay – DPW, Sections 1 and 2

The Town and Union agree to Amend Article IX - Emergency On-Call Pay - DPW, Sections 1 and 2 to read as follows:

Section 1. Effective July 1, 2025, the rate of compensation during the summer season (April 16 – Nov 14) for emergency standby shall be \$170 per week; effective July 1, 2026, this rate shall be \$180 per week; effective July 1, 2027, this rate shall be \$185. Callouts will be compensated at the four (4) hour min Rate. Employees on emergency on-call during the summer season as defined in the above sentence, shall be permitted to take a work vehicle home pursuant to the Town of Groton Policy/Procedure for Personal Use of Town Vehicles.

Section 2. Effective July 1, 2025, the rate of compensation for emergency on call pay for the Highway Foreman during the winter season shall be \$245 per week; effective July 1, 2026, this rate shall be \$255 per week; effective July 1, 2027, this rate shall be \$260. The foreman will be required to receive all calls from the Police/communications center and determine/direct the appropriate resources and personnel required to mitigate the emergency call. The Town will provide a phone for department use or reimburse the employee for use of his/her private phone for town business. A copy of his/her bill will be required for authorization to reimburse the employee.

7. Article X – Longevity, Section 1

The Town and Union agree to amend Article X – Longevity, Section 1 to read as follows:

Section 1. The Town agrees to pay annually, on the employee’s anniversary date, the following amounts of money to each employee for his/her years of service, years of service to be computed as follows:

Years of Service

Beginning the 5 th – 9 th	\$775
10 th – 14 th	\$1,000
15 th – 19 th	\$1,250
20 th – 24 th	\$1,500
25 th plus	\$1,750

8. Article XV – Bereavement Leave, Section 1

The Town and Union agree to amend Article XV – Bereavement Leave, Section 1 to read as follows:

Section 1. Each employee in the bargaining unit shall be granted leave without loss of pay in the event of a death in his/her immediate family. Such leave shall be for up to five (5) working days. The start time of the leave shall be mutually agreed between the employee and the Department Head. For purposes of the article the term “immediate family” shall mean and include the following: grandfather, grandmother, father, mother, husband, wife, brother, sister, son, daughter, grandson, granddaughter, in a natural in-law or step relationship or any other relationship between an employee and another person which is characterized by mutual responsibility and support generally associated with familial relationship.

9. Previous MOA Dated May 18, 2022 – Article XVIII – Holidays, Section 1

The Town and Union agreed on May 18, 2022 to amend the Article XVIII - Holidays, Section 1, to read as follows:

Section 1. The following shall be recognized and observed as paid Holidays:

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Indigenous People’s Day
President's Day	Veteran’s Day
Patriots Day	Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day	Christmas Day
Independence Day	Juneteenth

10. Article XXI – Licenses and Loss of Licenses, Sections 2 and 3

The Town and Union agree to amend Article XXI – Licenses and Loss of Licenses, Sections 2 and 3 to read as follows:

Section 2.

Employees working within the Water Department shall be required to obtain and maintain their Water Operators License as defined under 236 CMR 2.00 through 5.00. The Town of Groton shall pay for all of the required training sessions in order for the employee to maintain said license. All required training sessions shall be pre-approved by the Department Head prior to enrollment in said course/training session. Employees obtaining a backflow license shall receive a \$1,750 stipend each year. Employee(s) obtaining a Grade 3 Water Distribution or a Grade 3 Water Treatment License shall receive a \$2,500 stipend each year. Employee(s) obtaining a Grade 4 Water Distribution or a Water Treatment License shall receive a \$3,750 stipend each year. Employees are only eligible for one Grade 3 or one Grade 4 license. Payment for existing licenses shall be paid on July 1. Payment for new licenses obtained after July 1st shall be pro-rated from the date of passage of exam.

Section 3.

The Lead Mechanic as designated by the Department of Public Works Director shall receive an annual Stipend of \$2,000. In addition, employees may be required to obtain new licenses and/or additional licenses in order to perform their duties. The Town may provide the employee sufficient time and training to obtain said license. This Agreement shall not prevent the Town from requiring the employees to obtain these new and/or additional licenses. Employees who obtain the following licenses shall receive the following stipend annually:

- Class A License - \$1,000
- 4G Hoisting License - \$ 250
- 4E Hoisting License - \$ 250

Said payment shall be paid on the second pay period of July in each year. The Town will not pay for any license or training for licenses not utilized to perform their duties.

11. Miscellaneous

The Town and Union agree to meet to review the Drug and Alcohol policy as it pertains to positive marijuana tests and creating the position of CDL Trainer.

APPROVED:

Town of Groton

SEIU, Local 888

Date: _____

APPENDIX A - WAGE SCALES

		FISCAL YEAR 2026 3% Adjustment		
		GRADE	LOW	HIGH
1	Laborer	4	19.95	26.50
2	Truck Driver/Laborer	5	21.93	29.19
3	Equipment Operator/Laborer/ Technical Laborer	8	27.37	36.39
4	Heavy Equipment Operator Stormwater Technician	9	27.91	37.12
5	Senior Technician - Water 1	10	31.09	41.23
6	Senior Technician - Water 2	11	31.68	42.05
7	Mechanic	10	30.68	40.85
8	Foreman Facilities Foreman	11	31.29	41.64

		FISCAL YEAR 2027 3% Adjustment		
		GRADE	LOW	HIGH
1	Laborer	4	20.55	27.30
2	Truck Driver/Laborer	5	22.59	30.07
3	Equipment Operator/Laborer/ Technical Laborer	8	28.19	37.48
4	Heavy Equipment Operator Stormwater Technician	9	28.75	38.23
5	Senior Technician - Water 1	10	32.02	42.47
6	Senior Technician - Water 2	11	32.63	43.31
7	Mechanic	10	31.60	42.08
8	Foreman Facilities Foreman	11	32.23	42.89

		FISCAL YEAR 2028 3% Adjustment		
		GRADE	LOW	HIGH
1	Laborer	4	21.17	28.12
2	Truck Driver/Laborer	5	23.27	30.97
3	Equipment Operator/Laborer/ Technical Laborer	8	29.04	38.60
4	Heavy Equipment Operator Stormwater Technician	9	29.61	39.38
5	Senior Technician - Water 1	10	32.98	43.74
6	Senior Technician - Water 2	11	33.61	44.61
7	Mechanic	10	32.55	43.34
8	Foreman Facilities Foreman	11	33.20	44.18

**Town of Groton
and
AFSCME Council 93 Local 1703 – Groton Supervisor’s Union
Tentative Agreement
February 26, 2025**

Based on a Bargaining Session held on February 26, 2025, the Town and AFSCME Council 93, Local 1703 have tentatively agreed to the following:

1. Article 8 – Wages, Section 1

The Town and Union agree to amend Article 8 – “Wages”, Section 1 as follows:

Section 1. The Wage and Salary Matrix shall be set forth in Appendix B as follows:

<u>Supervisor Union Employee</u>	<u>FY 2026 Salary Increase - 3%</u>	<u>FY 2027 Salary Increase - 3%</u>	<u>FY 2028 Salary Increase - 3%</u>
Charlotte Steeves	\$ 83,478	\$ 85,982	\$ 88,562
Ashely Doucette	\$ 73,181	\$ 75,377	\$ 77,638
Tom Orcutt	\$ 115,332	\$ 118,792	\$ 122,356
Takashi Tada	\$ 93,192	\$ 95,988	\$ 98,868
Bob Garside	\$ 103,580	\$ 106,687	\$ 109,888
Tom Delaney	\$ 124,542	\$ 128,278	\$ 132,126
Nicole Sarvela	\$ 95,561	\$ 98,428	\$ 101,381

2. Article 8 – Wages, Section 2

The Town and Union agree to amend Article 8 – “Wages”, Section 2 as follows:

Section 2. The following Wage Increase Adjustment percentages will apply:

- 3% wage increase July 1, 2025
- 3% wage increase July 1, 2026
- 3% wage increase July 1, 2027

Prior to September, 2025 (or at a future date mutually agreed to by the Town and Union), the Town and Union agree to open this Agreement and meet to review the results of the Pay and Salary Classification Study conducted by the Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management, University of Massachusetts Boston to determine if any adjustments to the current salaries of Union Members are to be considered. Any changes shall be mutually agreed to by the Town and the Union. Any agreed to adjustments requiring additional pay shall be subject to the availability of funds and appropriation by the Groton Town Meeting.

In the case that any other bargaining unit receives a higher wage adjustment, during the life of this Agreement, more than provided in the Collective Bargaining Agreement, then parties shall meet to bargain over wages only.

3. Article 9 – Longevity, Section 1

The Town and Union agree to amend Article 9 – “Longevity”, Section 1 as follows:

Section 1. The Town agrees to pay annually in a separate check, the following amounts of money to each employee for his/her years of service, years of service to be computed as follows:

Years of Service

Beginning the 5 th – 10 th	\$500
Beginning the 11 th - 15 th	\$1000
Beginning the 16 th - 20 th	\$1500
Beginning the 21 st - 24 th	\$1950
Beginning the 25 th plus	\$2300

4. Article 12 – Holidays, Section 1

The Town and Union agree to amend **Article 11 – “Holidays”**, Section 1 to read as follows:

Section 1. Each standard employee of the Town shall be entitled to holidays with pay in accordance with the following schedule:

New Year's Day	Martin Luther King Day
President's Day	Patriot's Day
Memorial Day	Independence Day
Labor Day	Columbus Day/Indigenous People's Day
Veterans' Day	Thanksgiving Day
Christmas Day	Juneteenth

5. Article 30 – Duration of Agreement

The Town and Union agree to amend Article 30 “Duration of Agreement” to read as follows:

This agreement shall be effective upon execution by both parties and approved at a vote of Town Meeting for a period beginning July 1, 2025, up to and including June 30, 2028, and thereafter for a successive one (1) year period unless one of the parties hereto on or before January 15, 2028, or any subsequent termination thereafter, shall notify the party hereto in writing of its desire to modify or amend the same.

6. Appendix A

The Town and Union agree to amend Appendix A as follows:

All supervisory employees of the Town of Groton including the following titles: Building Commissioner, Land Use Director, Cable TV Access Programming Director, Department of Public Works Director, Water Superintendent, Council on Aging Director, Conservation Administrator. Excluding all non-supervisory employees, managerial, confidential and casual employees.

APPROVED:

Town of Groton

AFSCME Council 93

Date: _____



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

To: *Select Board
Finance Committee*

From: *Mark W. Haddad – Town Manager*

Subject: *Three Year Projection*

Date: *March 20, 2025*

The purpose of this memorandum is to follow-up on Tuesday's Finance Committee/Select Board Meeting in which I was asked to put together a three (3) year projection taking into consideration an override in the amount of \$1,454,154 in Fiscal Year 2026. As you know, the Override is to increase the Operational Assessment for the Groton Dunstable Regional School District by \$673,250 and add six (6) Firefighter/EMTs to the Groton Fire Department with a FY 2026 cost of \$630,904 and overall cost of \$780,904 when you take into consideration a Pension Increase anticipated to be assessed in Fiscal Year 2028.

In putting together the three (3) year projection, I have made the following assumptions:

1. The Fiscal Year 2026 Budget as approved by the Finance Committee, taking into consideration the successful passing of an Override of Proposition 2½ in FY 2026 of \$1,454,154 for the above referenced issues.
2. A surplus of \$150,000 in FY 2026.
3. The allowable 2½% increase in the Tax Levy as allowed by Proposition 2½ in both Fiscal Year 2027 and Fiscal Year 2028, with \$20 million in new growth in both Fiscal Years.
4. A three (3%) percent increase in salaries for all municipal employes in Fiscal Year 2027 and Fiscal Year 2028.
5. A one (1%) increase in expenses in Fiscal Year 2027 and Fiscal Year 2028.
6. A two and one-half (2½%) increase in the Operating Assessment of the Nashoba Valley Technical Regional High School in Fiscal Year 2027 and Fiscal Year 2028.
7. An eight (8%) percent increase in Health Insurance in Fiscal Year 2027 and Fiscal Year 2028.
8. An increase of 6.54% in the Town's Pension Assessment in Fiscal Year 2027 and an increase of 11.8% in Fiscal Year 2028 to take into consideration the six (6) Firefighter/EMTs added in Fiscal Year 2026.
9. Budgeting for Twenty-Five (25%) percent of the cost of the Patriot Regional Emergency Communication Center in FY 2028.
10. Level Funding the Operating Assessment of the Groton Dunstable Regional School District in both Fiscal Year 2027 and Fiscal Year 2028 since they have not developed their own long-term projection.

Based on these assumptions, in addition to the surplus in Fiscal Year 2026 (\$150,000), the Town would have a surplus of \$925,590 in Fiscal Year 2027 and \$1,320,889 in Fiscal Year 2028 to fund increases in the Operating Assessment of the Groton Dunstable Regional School District. The following is the three (3) year projection for your review:

TOWN OF GROTON
THREE YEAR PROJECTION

Revised: 3/20/2025

		<u>FY 2026</u>	<u>FY 2027</u>	<u>Percent Increase</u>	<u>FY 2028</u>	<u>Percent Increase</u>
<u>Expenditures</u>						
Municipal Wages	\$	9,993,072	\$ 10,292,864	3.00%	\$ 10,601,650	3.00%
Employee Benefits	\$	4,872,406	\$ 5,212,869	6.99%	\$ 5,727,756	9.88%
Sub-Total	\$	14,865,478	\$ 15,505,733	4.31%	\$ 16,329,406	5.31%
Municipal Expenses	\$	3,382,792	\$ 3,416,620	1.00%	\$ 3,600,786	5.39%
Sub - Total	\$	18,248,270	\$ 18,922,353	3.69%	\$ 19,930,193	5.33%
Debt Service - In Levy Capacity Only	\$	406,680	\$ 400,000	-1.64%	\$ 400,000	0.00%
Total - Municipal Budget	\$	18,654,950	\$ 19,322,353	3.58%	\$ 20,330,193	5.22%
Groton Dunstable Regional School	\$	28,451,198	\$ 28,451,198	0.00%	\$ 28,451,198	0.00%
GDRSD Capital	\$	278,643	\$ 278,643	0.00%	\$ 278,643	0.00%
Nashoba Regional Technical High School	\$	908,490	\$ 931,202	2.50%	\$ 954,482	2.50%
Total - Regional Schools Assessments	\$	29,638,331	\$ 29,661,043	0.08%	\$ 29,684,323	0.08%
Total Operating Expenses	\$	48,293,281	\$ 48,983,397	1.43%	\$ 50,014,516	2.11%
Additional Appropriations						
OPEB	\$	200,000	\$ 202,000	1.00%	\$ 204,020	1.00%
Capital Budget Request	\$	899,435	\$ 819,435	-8.89%	\$ 820,000	0.07%
Bond Premium Payment	\$	1,062	\$ -	0.00%	\$ -	0.00%
Cherry Sheet Offsets	\$	32,311	\$ 32,311	0.00%	\$ 32,311	0.00%
Snow and Ice Deficit	\$	-	\$ 100,000	100.00%	\$ 102,500	2.50%
State and County Charges	\$	104,498	\$ 107,110	2.50%	\$ 109,788	2.50%
Allowance for Abatements/Exemptions	\$	150,000	\$ 150,000	0.00%	\$ 150,000	0.00%
Sub-Total Additional Appropriations	\$	1,387,306	\$ 1,410,856	1.70%	\$ 1,418,619	0.55%
Grand Total Appropriations	\$	49,680,587	\$ 50,394,253	1.44%	\$ 51,433,135	2.06%
<u>Revenues</u>						
Previous Year Proposition 2½ Levy Limit	\$	38,135,363	\$ 40,771,651	6.91%	\$ 42,106,542	3.27%
Allowed 2½ Increase	\$	953,384	\$ 1,019,291	6.91%	\$ 1,052,664	3.27%
New Growth	\$	228,750	\$ 315,600	37.97%	\$ 323,490	2.50%
Proposition 2½ Override	\$	1,454,154	\$ -	0.00%	\$ -	0.00%
State Aid	\$	1,192,703	\$ 1,192,703	0.00%	\$ 1,192,703	0.00%
Local Receipts	\$	5,568,327	\$ 5,620,383	0.93%	\$ 5,673,480	0.94%
Free Cash	\$	603,855	\$ 603,855	0.00%	\$ 603,855	0.00%
Transfer from Enterprise Funds	\$	214,002	\$ 218,282	2.00%	\$ 222,648	2.00%
Other Available Funds	\$	-	\$ -	0.00%	\$ -	0.00%
EMS Fund	\$	530,614	\$ 350,000	-34.04%	\$ 350,000	0.00%
Local Access Cable RRFA	\$	130,000	\$ 130,000	0.00%	\$ 130,000	0.00%
GDRSD Capital Stabilization Fund	\$	-	\$ 278,643	100.00%	\$ 278,643	0.00%
Capital Stabilization Fund	\$	819,435	\$ 819,435	0.00%	\$ 820,000	0.07%
Grand Total Revenue	\$	49,830,587	\$ 51,319,843	2.99%	\$ 52,754,024	2.79%
Surplus/(Deficit)	\$	150,000	\$ 925,590		\$ 1,320,889	

I look forward to discussing this in more detail with the Select Board and Finance Committee. Please let me know if you have any additional questions or concerns.

MWH/rjb

cc: Finance Team

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
THE GROTON CENTER
MONDAY, MARCH 3, 2025
UN-APPROVED**

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

Also Present: Mark Haddad, Town Manager; Kara Cruikshank, Executive Assistant to the Town Manager; Patricia DuFresne, Assistant Finance Director/Town Accountant; Melisa Doig, Human Resource Director; Hannah Moller, Treasurer/Tax Collector; Megan Foster, Principal Assessor; Geoff Bruno, Groton Dunstable Regional School District Superintendent; Sherry Kersey, Groton Dunstable Regional School District Director of Business; Jason Silva, Dunstable Town Administrator; Dawn Dunbar, Town Clerk; Fire Chief Arthur Cheeks;

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

Groton Dunstable Regional School Committee Members Present: Lacey McCabe, Chair; Christina Andriole; Fay Raynor; Rohit Bhasin; Rosanna Casavecchia;

Dunstable Select Board Members Present: Leah Basbanes, Chair; Kieran Meehan, Vice Chair; Ronald Mikol;

Dunstable Advisory Members Present: Jacob Lewen, Chair; Clinton Keeney; Leo Tometich; Matthew Naughton.

Ms. Manugian called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Pisani announced that Representative Margaret Scarsdale nominated Chief Arthur Cheeks for the Black Excellence Leadership Award. Chief Cheeks was presented with the award at a ceremony last Friday at the State House.

Mr. Cunningham announced that the Open House at Florence Roche was a great success. Ms. Pine said the School is beautiful and inviting and thanked the School Building Committee for their efforts. Mr. Haddad said refreshments were provided, and he thanked Forge and Vine for sponsoring the vendor for the event.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD #1

Mr. Phil Francisco from the Planning Board attended the meeting as the appointed liaison to the Select Board. He reported that the Planning Board unanimously approved the 2025 Master Plan Update on Thursday, February 27th. This update will be presented as a warrant article at the Town Meeting to seek the town's endorsement. The final version of the Master Plan is now available on both the Town of Groton and Planning Board websites. He encouraged the Board to meet with the Planning Board for a more in-depth discussion about the Master Plan.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

- 1. Consider Approving a Letter of Support to Make Remote and Hybrid Meetings Permanent.**

Mr. Haddad explained that the legislation authorizing remote, hybrid, and virtual meetings will expire on March 31, 2025. A bill before the legislature (HD 2863/SD 1850) would make this permanent. At the request of Select Board Member Cunningham, a letter of support was drafted for the Chair to sign and to be sent to the State Delegation. The Board received a copy of the draft letter for their review. Mr. Haddad respectfully requested that the Select Board vote to approve the issuance of the letter. Mr. Cunningham said he recently attended an MRPC meeting, and it was discussed, so he thought it was appropriate to bring it forward. Mr. Haddad believes that remote, hybrid, and virtual meetings have promoted more public participation. Ms. Pine thanked Mr. Cunningham for bringing this forward.

Ms. Pine made a motion to approve issuing the letter of support to make remote and hybrid meetings permanent. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Update on the 2025 Spring Town Meeting Warrant.

Mr. Haddad explained that since the Warrant closed on February 21st, he received requests to add the following three Articles to the Warrant:

- Article: Repair Sprinkler System at Town Hall
- Article: Disposition of Town-Owned Land on Hoyts Wharf Road
- Article: An Act Authorizing the Town of Groton to Adopt Alternative Methods for Notice of Public Hearings

Mr. Haddad respectfully requested that the Board vote to open the Warrant and allow him to add these three Articles to the Warrant.

Mr. Cunningham made a motion to open the warrant for the 2025 Spring Town Meeting. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Pine made a motion to add the three additional articles to the warrant. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Pine made a motion to close the warrant. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Update on Fiscal Year 2026 Budget.

Mr. Haddad explained that the Groton Select Board, Groton Finance Committee, Dunstable Select Board, Dunstable Advisory Committee, and Groton Dunstable Regional School District Committee would be meeting in joint session at 7:00 p.m. to discuss the FY 2026 Budget. They will also determine whether or not to seek an override(s) of Proposition 2 ½ to balance the Budget.

Mr. Haddad said that a decision needs to be made on whether to seek an override(s) of Proposition 2 ½ to cover the anticipated Assessment from the Groton Dunstable Regional School District to fund the Superintendent's Proposed Budget and to cover the addition of six (6) Firefighter/EMTs for the Groton Fire Department. He explained that the School Assessment would require an additional

\$827,090. The Town Manager's Proposed Budget has \$1,365,564 set aside for the Assessment, and the anticipated increase is \$2,192,654. He said adding six (6) Firefighters/EMTs for the Groton Fire Department in FY 2026 would require an additional override of \$780,904.

Mr. Haddad informed the Board that if they decide to pursue an Override, they need to determine whether to include one or two questions on the Ballot. To place the Override question(s) on the Annual Election, these must be submitted to the Town Clerk by April 7th, the deadline for posting the warrant. He would like the Board to make a decision this evening. Mr. Haddad also thought it was important to explain that the total amount of \$780,904 for the additional (6) six Firefighters/EMTs includes \$150,000 allocated for pension costs. He said this expense would not impact the town for another two or three years but wants to incorporate it into the levy capacity now.

4. Update on Select Board Meeting Schedule through the 2025 Spring Town Meeting.

Monday, March 10, 2025	Public Hearing on the Spring Town Meeting Executive Session
Monday, March 17, 2025	No Meeting
Monday, March 24, 2025	Review Prescott Building Assessment- Determine if any Action Needs to be taken
Monday, March 31, 2025	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, April 7, 2025	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, April 14, 2025	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, April 21, 2025	No Meeting- Patriot's Day Holiday
Saturday, April 26 th	Spring Town Meeting

ITEMS FOR SELECT BOARD CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL

1. Consider Appointing Po Tse to the Diversity, Equity, And Inclusion Committee.

Mr. Pisani made a motion to appoint Po Tse to the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, with a term expiring on June 30, 2025. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Consider Approving a One Day All Alcohol Beverage License for the Friends of Prescott's for Whiskey 101 to be held on Friday, March 7, 2025, at the Prescott Community Center from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Mr. Cunningham made a motion to approve a One Day All Alcohol Beverage License for the Friends of Prescott's for Whiskey 101 on Friday, March 7, 2025, at the Prescott Community Center from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Consider Approving a One Day Wine and Malt Beverage License for the Friends of Prescott's Open Mic Night to be held at the Groton School on Friday, March 14, 2025, from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Ms. Pine made a motion to approve a One Day Wine and Malt Beverages License for the Friends of Prescott's Open Mic Night to be held at the Prescott Community Center on Friday, March 14, 2025, from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

On Going issues

- A. PFAS—Mr. Haddad said the construction for the PFAS waterline will be completed in Groton next week. He said North Street would be the only remaining street in Groton and a Road Opening permit had been filed in the Town of Dunstable. Mr. Haddad said the parts for the Chlorine Booster station currently have a long lead time, which is necessary to provide clean, potable water to the High School. He explained that if the waterline pipe is ready, irrigation water could be provided to the high school. Mr. Haddad said this is one of Groton's best projects.
- B. Nashoba Valley Medical Center Working Group—Mr. Haddad explained that the committee co-chairs wanted to disband the Working Group after releasing the Final Report. Mr. Haddad said that the Working Group does not wish to disband, as its work is ongoing. He said Representative Margaret Scarsdale is leading the effort and is doing an excellent job.
- C. Charter Review Committee—The Committee's next meeting will be held on Thursday, March 6th at 4:30 p.m., located at Town Hall, to finalize some of their recommendations. The public hearing will be held on March 27th,
- D. Florence Roche Elementary School Construction Project—Mr. Haddad thanked the Building and School Committees for a job well done organizing the Open House on Saturday, March 1st.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

SELECT BOARD LIASON REPORTS

None

Approval of the Regularly Scheduled Meeting Minutes of February 24, 2025.

Ms. Pine made a motion to approve the minutes of the regularly scheduled meeting of February 25, 2025. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

At 6:50 p.m., the Select Board held a 10-minute recess.

7:00 P.M. In Joint Session with the Groton Finance Committee, Groton Dunstable Regional School District Committee, Dunstable Select Board, and the Dunstable Advisory Committee- Review Proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Proposals- Determine Whether or Not to Seek an Override of Propositions 2 ½ to Balance the Fiscal Year 2026 Operating Budget.

Ms. Manugian resumed the Select Board meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Robertson called the Groton Finance Committee meeting to order.

Ms. McCabe called the Groton Dunstable Regional School meeting to order.

Mr. Meehan called the Dunstable Select Board Committee meeting to order.

Mr. Lewen called the Dunstable Advisory Committee meeting to order.

Mr. Haddad thanked everyone for attending that evening. He said that with regard to Groton's Fiscal Year 2026 Budget, a decision needs to be made on whether to seek/consider an override(s) of Proposition 2 ½ to cover the anticipated Assessment from the Groton Dunstable Regional School

District to fund the Superintendents Proposed Budget and to cover the addition of six (6) Firefighter/EMTs for the Groton Fire Department. He explained that the Groton Select Board and Finance Committee would later discuss the proposal for adding six (6) additional Firefighters/EMTs, but he wanted to focus on the Assessment now. He explained that based on the latest estimates received since he submitted the Proposed Budget on January 31, 2025, the Town would need an additional \$827,090 to cover the full anticipated Assessment from the Groton Dunstable Regional School District (the Town Manager's Proposed Budget has \$1,365,564 set aside for the Assessment and the anticipated increase is \$2,192,654). An override of \$827,090 would add \$0.29 to the FY 2026 Anticipated Tax Rate and cost the average taxpayer (a home valued at \$707,877) an additional \$205 per year. He hoped that during the meeting that evening, the Towns of Groton and Dunstable would decide whether or not to proceed with an override. Mr. Haddad explained to include an override question(s) on the Annual Town Election Ballot; they must be submitted to the Town Clerk by April 7th. He emphasized the sooner they make a decision, the better.

Ms. McCabe, Chair of the Groton Dunstable Regional School Committee, thanked the Boards for their collaboration and thoughtful questions. She said that in light of the impacts of last year's Budget cuts, she hopes they will allow voters to weigh in on an override question for the Ballot and get support from Dunstable and Groton. Ms. McCabe stated that the School Committee is voting on the Superintendent's Budget on March 12th.

Dunstable Town Administrator Mr. Jason Silva explained that the Town of Dunstable faces an approximate deficit of \$209,000 if it has to match the Town of Groton. He stated that the total deficit for maintaining level funding for the schools is approximately \$547,000. He proposed a draft schedule and timeline to the Dunstable Select Board regarding two Overrides, stating it would be a tight timeline. Mr. Silva stated that an Override was necessary to fund the school and Town budget. Ms. Pine asked Mr. Silva if they would ask for a combined amount. Mr. Silva stated that the Dunstable Select and Advisory Board had not made any decisions or held any votes. He believed they would propose a single figure to include both the Municipal and the School Budget. Dunstable Select Board Chair Ms. Leah Basbanes clarified that there would not be two separate Override questions on the Ballot, as they considered it one Budget. A third option for a Budget has not been considered, as it isn't an option at this point.

Mr. Cunningham asked the School Committee if they were inclined to follow the Superintendent's Budget. Ms. McCabe confirmed that they were.

Mr. Cunningham said he was in favor of including an Override question on the Ballot to fund the Schools. Mr. Silva suggested that presenting three different budgets at the Annual Town Meeting might lead to confusion. Ms. Pine said she would prefer voters to have some options but agreed that having multiple choices may be confusing. Mr. Haddad stated that it would be his intention to propose a contingent budget at Town Meeting so that if the override failed, the Town would not need another Town Meeting to balance the budget. School Committee member Ms. Fay Raynor asked whether the Town of Groton would be willing to go for two Overrides. Mr. Haddad said the Select Board and Finance Committee needed to discuss that matter during their meeting that evening.

Dunstable Select Board Vice Chair Mr. Kieran Meehan asked the Boards if this year felt different from the previous year. Mr. Reilly responded that it felt different from the previous year and expressed his support in two Override questions. He believes there is an appetite for pursuing it this year. Mr. Meehan stated that coordinating the Boards to hold a meeting requires a lot of effort. Ms. Linskey believes this issue will be revisited annually, indicating a problem with the state funding. Mr. Robertson said this issue wouldn't be resolved this year, but it's important to start working on a solution. Dunstable Advisory member Mr. Matthew Naughton expressed that his children felt the effects of the Budget cuts made by the Schools, and he believes that any parent with a child in the school has noticed the same. He thanked Mr. Haddad and Mr. Silva for bringing Groton and Dunstable together and said this collaboration feels like a team effort. Mr. Lewon said if an Override doesn't pass, there would be more significant cuts to the Fire and Police Departments, and a building would close. He emphasized the need for people to recognize the need. School Committee member Ms. Rosanna Casavecchia asked Mr. Haddad to provide the anticipated tax rate per hundred thousand for the taxpayers. Mr. Francisco suggested bringing Budget information to the voters in various locations. Mr. Clinton Keeney stated they need to explain to the residents why this year's request differs from last year's.

Mr. Cunningham made a motion for the Groton Select Board to place a ballot question on the May 20th Annual Town Election to support the Groton Dunstable Regional School District Superintendent's Budget with a maximum of \$827,090. Ms. Pine seconded the motion.

Discussion

Mr. Reilly said they cannot keep returning to the taxpayers yearly. He said it was important to inform taxpayers what they would do better. Ms. Manugian expressed her concern that this situation feels similar to last year's and that they might lose credibility if they don't prove how things will change. Ms. Pine suggested they might consider doing something differently if the vote fails. Mr. Lewon believes that conducting an operational audit demonstrated an effort and provided information to the public. Mr. Silva believes this year is different from last year, and it has been communicated. He explained that the state needs to address Chapter 70 funding, as they seek a level service budget but cannot maintain it. He stated that numbers simply do not add up. Mr. Silva said many things are in the queue with Dunstable; they are working on long-term solutions. He believes there must be a better way to reach people so they can make an informed decision.

The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Haddad explained that the Groton Dunstable Regional School Committee will certify its Budget on March 12, 2025. The Dunstable Select Board needs to decide whether to place a question on the Ballot and to determine the proposed amount. Ms. Manugian asked how to develop a plan for this process. Mr. Haddad stated that he would begin planning public hearings and reach out to the School and the Town of Dunstable. Ms. McCabe discussed potential strategies for reducing the override amount.

Ms. McCabe adjourned the School Committee Meeting.

Mr. Meehan adjourned the Dunstable Select Board Meeting.

Mr. Lewon adjourned the Dunstable Advisory Board Meeting.

Groton Fire Chief Arthur Cheeks attended the discussion regarding the proposal for an Override to fund six more Firefighters/EMTs for the Groton Fire Department.

Mr. Haddad said adding six (6) Firefighters/EMTs in FY 2026 would cost an additional \$780,904. This would result in an increase in the anticipated FY 2026 Tax Rate of \$0.28 or an increase in the average tax bill of \$198. Should both Overrides be presented and passed, the total tax increase would be \$403.

Mr. Haddad said Chief Cheeks was looking at the need for FY 2026 and stated the Fire Department has been seeking additional manpower since 2019. Mr. Haddad said the Nashoba Valley Medical Center exacerbated the situation, and there was a need for additional Firefighters/EMTs. He stressed the importance of communicating this need. Chief Cheeks wanted to address the current availability issue and the timing of calls.

Ms. Pine inquired about the proposal of six new Firefighters/EMTs, specifically asking whether it would be possible to have more personnel available during daytime hours to respond to calls and if it was possible to implement this in phases. Chief Cheeks explained that the number of calls during daytime hours was comparable to those in the evening. He described two Firefighters as a band-aid or a temporary solution. Mr. Haddad stated that pursuing these options would involve many implications for the union.

Mr. Robertson stated that the closing of the Hospital has created additional problems. There are now fewer people to do inspections, and handling the administrative part of the job will be more challenging. He said they need to decide whether to follow the Chief's suggestions or continue to live with what they have. The Chief explained that new developments, such as 500 Main Street, are being constructed. Hiring more Firefighters would provide an appropriate response to calls and allow the department to maintain in-house staffing during incidents. He said they are experiencing burnout among the staff.

Mr. Pisani said the call department is dwindling. He said it was only a matter of time before this imploded and staffing would become an issue.

Mr. Green appreciates the need for six additional Firefighters but has requested supporting data for this proposal. He wants to fund these six new Firefighters without an Override. Mr. Haddad explained that there is no flexibility within the operating budget unless cuts are made to another department. He also said that the Chief has provided information regarding the number of calls, overlaps, shifts, and costs. Ms. Linskey inquired about how to get the entire town involved in this initiative. Ms. Pine would like the data broken down from 8:00 am to midnight, including inspections and calls.

The Boards discussed how to effectively explain this to the voters to gain support for the Override question to fund six (6) additional Firefighters/EMTs. Mr. Reilly said this is a safety issue. After a lengthy discussion, Mr. Robertson asked if the Select Board was prepared to take a vote that evening. Ms. Pine, Ms. Manugian, and Mr. Green said they needed more information to understand the numbers fully. Ms. Pine requested that the Chief provide a plan detailing how two or four firefighters could operate effectively. Mr. Haddad then asked the Chief to prepare a Presentation for the Select Board and Finance Committee for the upcoming Select Board Meeting on March 10th, at 6:00 p.m.

The Select Board Meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m. while the Finance Committee continued to convene for other business.

The Town Manager's Office received an invoice from MIIA for a Property and Casualty Endorsement in the amount of \$5,818. The Finance Committee reviewed this request.

Mr. Green made a motion to authorize the reserve fund transfer in the amount of \$5,818. Mr. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

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

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, MARCH 10, 2025
UN-APPROVED**

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

Also Present: Mark Haddad, Town Manager; Kara Cruikshank, Executive Assistant to the Town Manager; Patricia DuFresne, Assistant Finance Director/Town Accountant; Melisa Doig, Human Resource Director; Hannah Moller, Treasurer/Tax Collector; Megan Foster, Principal Assessor; Dawn Dunbar, Town Clerk; Fire Chief Arthur Cheeks; Megan Foster, Principal Assessor; Vanessa Abraham, Groton Public Library Director; Charlotte Weigel, Sustainability Committee Member; Tom Delaney, DPW Director; Brian Callahan, DPW Director in Training; Jeff Gordon, Greg Sheldon, Joni Parker Roach, Brian Bolton, Members of the Destination Groton Committee; Ebi Masalehdan, Monarch Path Owner; Megan Donovan, Prescott Director; Jim Gmeiner, Groton Sewer Commission Chair;

Groton Finance Committee Members: Bud Robertson, Chair; Mary Linskey, Vice Chair; Kristina Lengyel; Scott Whitefield; Gary Green; David Manugian.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Cunningham attended Tree House Cannabis's Grand opening over the weekend and said it was a very nice event, and he wished them the best.

Ms. Dawn Dunbar, the Groton Town Clerk, reminded residents and voters that the deadline to pull nomination papers for the Annual Town Election is Friday, March 28th, by 5:00 p.m. The last day to submit completed nomination papers to the Town Clerk's office is Tuesday, April 1st, by 5:00 p.m. Ms. Dunbar said 55 signatures were required.

Mr. Robertson called the Finance Committee to order.

Ms. Vanessa Abraham, the Director of the Groton Public Library, announced that it is Groton Reads Month. This year's book selection is about a former Groton resident titled "Finding Margaret Fuller."

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD #1

Mr. Haddad explained they received a letter from the Town of Ayer Select Board that was sent to Governor Healey. The letter expressed their disappointment regarding the lack of response concerning the closure of the Nashoba Valley Medical Center. It also urges her to take action in response to the Nashoba Valley Fire Chiefs' request for \$ 9.1 million to stabilize the Emergency Medical Response System. Mr. Haddad tailored the letter from the Town of Ayer for Groton. He respectfully requested that the Select Board vote to sign and issue the letter to Governor Healey.

Mr. Pisani made a motion to sign and issue the letter to Governor Healey. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Update on Fiscal Year 2026 Budget.

During the public hearing, Mr. Haddad said he would update the Board on the Fiscal year 2026 Budget.

2. Update on the Select Board Meeting Schedule through the 2025 Spring Town Meeting.

Monday, March 17, 2025	No Meeting
Monday, March 24, 2025	Review Prescott Building Assessment- Determine if any Action Needs to be taken
Monday, March 31, 2025	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, April 7, 2025	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, April 14, 2025	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, April 21, 2025	No Meeting- Patriot's Day Holiday
Saturday, April 26 th	Spring Town Meeting

ITEMS FOR SELECT BOARD CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL

1. Consider Approving the Settlement Agreement with the Estate of Laura Elizabeth Woodson.

Mr. Haddad explained that the estate of Laura Woodson had left money for the Groton Fire Department to be used for ambulance-related matters. Initially, the funds were left to the Groton Ambulance Association, which no longer exists. After working with Town Counsel, it was determined that the money should be left to the Groton Fire Department to address ambulance-related issues. The Board was provided copies of the Settlement and Release Agreements for review. Mr. Haddad respectfully requested that the Select Board vote to approve and sign this Agreement.

Mr. Pisani made a motion to approve and sign the Settlement and Release Agreements with the estate of Laura Elizabeth Woodson. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

6:05 P.M. Consider Discussion/Potential Decision on Seeking an Override of Proposition 2 ½ to Add Six (6) full-time Firefighters/EMTs to the Groton Fire Department in FY 2026.

Fire Chief Arthur Cheeks was in attendance for the continued discussion.

Mr. Haddad said he wanted to continue the lengthy discussion from last week's joint session meeting with the Finance Committee and Select Board. They discussed whether to consider seeking an override of Proposition 2 ½ to add six (6) Full-time Firefighters/EMTs to the Groton Fire Department in FY 2026. Based on the conversation from last week's meeting, Mr. Haddad and Chief Cheeks did a lot of research and concluded that increasing staffing within the Fire Department was crucial. They explained that the Fire Department experienced an extremely busy day on Friday, as several emergency calls came in simultaneously.

Mr. Haddad explained that he and Chief Cheeks had worked together to come up with a proposal, taking into consideration the impact on Groton's residents and taxpayers by seeking overrides for both the Groton Dunstable Regional School District and the Groton Fire Department in Fiscal Year 2026.

Chief Cheeks proposed a “band-aid” approach that should help support the department. Mr. Haddad provided the Board with a memo detailing the proposal and reviewed it with them. He explained that both former Fire Chief Steele McCurdy and current Fire Chief Arthur Cheeks have demonstrated the need for additional staffing since 2021, long before the closure of the Nashoba Medical Center. The history of the need was documented in the provided memo.

Mr. Haddad stated that, based on the statistics presented in the memo, they would propose adding two additional Firefighters/EMTs in FY 2026, although having six full-time Firefighters/EMTs would be ideal. Two additional Firefighters/EMTs, combined with the two new Firefighters added last fall, would ensure that three Career Firefighters/EMTs are available during all shifts. This proposal would also provide at least one Firefighter/EMT to respond to a medical call if the other ambulance is already on an extended call. Additionally, it would position the department to respond more effectively to emergencies, requiring only one additional call Firefighter/EMT to respond to a call. Mr. Haddad said this proposal would address the issue of conducting inspections, plan reviews, etc. The memo outlined the Staffing Plan that would be implemented to address the staffing and response challenges (identified in the Request for Additional Staffing), which is approximately \$260,301. The actual allocation for FY 2026 would be \$210,301, as the pension cost (\$50,000) would be assessed to the Town until the next Fiscal year or FY 2028.

Ms Pine thanked Chief Cheeks for his efforts and believes the proposal of two Full-time Firefighters/EMTs is the right move for this year. Mr. Reilly said he was a little disappointed in the proposal of only two Firefighters/EMTs, and he has been getting a lot of phone calls regarding this. Chief Cheeks said six Firefighters/EMTs would be the optimum, offering better protection for Groton’s residents. He explained this was an opportunity for them to be proactive, ensuring every resident received the same level of protection day and night. Chief Cheeks said you can’t schedule emergencies, and their timing is unpredictable. He said that with two Firefighters/EMTs, when everyone is home at night, they won’t get the same level of protection, and he believes that is unfair. He thinks this should be presented at the town meeting so taxpayers can vote. Mr. Haddad clarified the differences in the FY 2026 tax bill: approximately \$210,000 for two Firefighters/EMTs versus approximately \$633,000 for six Firefighters/EMTs. He explained that he tried to provide the Boards with enough information to make an informed decision. Mr. Cunningham said it is a difficult decision, and the more palatable, the better it will be for the taxpayers. Ms. Manugian said she was still struggling with what two new Firefighters/EMTs do, even with the current staffing model, and wanted to understand the detriment of hiring someone specifically to go on inspections, etc. Chief Cheeks responded that the person would be dedicated to only that and not covering the department's needs. Mr. Robertson believes they have enough information to bring two additional Firefighters/EMTs forward. He said adding these two will ensure that each shift has three personnel available to respond to calls. He said it is still necessary to assess how much the response time improves over the next year and to analyze the factors contributing to any increase in call volume. Mr. Robertson suggested starting with the two additional hires and returning with more data for review in the next year or so. Ms. Pine expressed her appreciation for the Chief’s dedication and believes a phased approach is the best strategy. Ms. Manugian inquired whether it would be possible to structure the request to include both an ask for two (2) Firefighters/EMTs and another ask for six (6) Firefighters/EMTs. Mr. Haddad explained they could take a tiered approach and

have one ballot question that asks for two additional Firefighter/EMTs and another ballot question that would ask for six (6) additional Firefighter/EMTs.

Ms. Pine believes combining the School and Firefighter/EMTs request override questions may create a stronger case. Ms. Manugian believes a tiered option would be best and disagrees with combining the School and Firefighters/EMTs. Mr. Haddad also shared his concern about combining them, stating that the School District override question aims to maintain current services, and the Fire Department question aims to expand services.

Mr. Green mentioned that if money were not a concern, he would recommend going with six (6) Firefighters/EMTs. He inquired about the alternative plan (Plan B) and noted that it involves having zero firefighters. He suggested that having two (2) Firefighters makes the most sense, as it would improve coverage for all shifts. Given the current uncertainties, he expressed that he could support the decision for two (2) Firefighters. He also pointed out that there is no clarity about the budget for next year.

After careful consideration and a spirited debate, the Board was prepared to make a motion.

Ms. Pine made a motion to place an override question for funding two (2) Firefighters/EMTs on the Annual Election Ballot requesting an additional \$260,301. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion.

Discussion

Ms. Manugian believes six (6) Firefighters/EMTs are necessary, as she does not support asking for only two. Mr. Cunningham suggested that a second motion could be made. Ms. Manugian stated that a two-tier motion would be ideal. Mr. Haddad suggested one motion with two questions.

Ms. Pine withdrew the motion.

Mr. Cunningham made a motion to offer a two-tiered override question: One Question for an override request of six (6) Firefighters/EMTs at \$ 780,904 with a Fiscal Year 2026 tax impact of \$630,904 and one Question for two (2) Firefighters/EMTs requesting \$260,301 with a Fiscal Year 2026 tax impact of \$210,301.

The Board discussed voting on the motions separately. Mr. Cunningham withdrew his motion.

Mr. Cunningham made a motion for a stand-alone override question on the ballot for six (6) Firefighters/EMTs, totaling \$780,904, with Fiscal Year 2026 tax impact of \$630,904. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion.

Discussion

Ms. Pine believes this would be too confusing and a losing proposition. Mr. Cunningham believes there is a value in saying we need six Firefighters/EMTs.

The motion carried 4 in favor, one against- Pine.

Ms. Pine made a motion to include a second stand-alone override question to the ballot question for two (2) Firefighters/EMTs, totaling \$260,301, with a Fiscal Year 2026 tax impact of \$210,301. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Haddad summarized that there will be two override questions related to the Fire Department. One question is for six (6) Firefighters/EMTs in the amount of \$780,904, and another is for two (2) Firefighters/EMTs in the amount of \$260,301.

Mr. Haddad then explained that he would present to the Finance Committee a contingent budget to add six (6) Firefighters/EMTs contingent on an override and two (2) Firefighters/EMTs contingent on an override. A third budget for the School District will be contingent on an override. He explained there would be a ballot question book that would explain everything.

7:00 P.M. In Joint Session with the Finance Committee- Public Hearing on the Warrant for the 2025 Spring Town Meeting.

Mr. Haddad read the Public Hearing notice into the record.

Mr. Haddad respectfully requested the Board to open the public hearing.

Ms. Pine made a motion to open the public hearing. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. The motions carried unanimously.

Mr. Robertson made a motion to open the public hearing. Mr. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The Select Board and Finance Committee held a joint session to conduct a public hearing on the articles contained in the 2026 Spring Town Meeting Warrant. Mr. Haddad provided the Board with a copy of the latest draft of the Warrant and reviewed it with the Board.

Article 1: Hear Reports

There were no questions.

Article 2: Elected Officials Compensation

The Town Moderator is proposed to receive a salary of \$1,000 in FY 2026.

Article 3: Wage and Classification Schedule

Mr. Haddad said this Article is for the three Bylaw employees. There were no questions.

Article 4: Appropriate FY 2026 Contribution to the OPEB Trust Fund

This is the annual contribution to the OPEB Trust Fund, which is necessary to prevent the net present liability from increasing. Mr. Haddad explained that the appropriation had been raised to \$200,000 to cover the liabilities associated with the two new firefighters added in this year's budget. Mr. Haddad believes an extra \$30,000 may be necessary, contingent upon an override passing, bringing the total to \$230,000. This increase will help manage long-term liabilities related to OPEB.

Articles 1-4 will be presented as one Consent Motion.

Article 5: Fiscal Year 2026 Annual Operating Budget

Mr. Haddad stated that the Groton-Dunstable Regional School District has a revised budget due to lower health insurance rates. As a result, the budget has decreased by \$200,000. He wanted to clarify that while the funding sources have changed, their overall budget remains the same. He explained that the Town must add \$673,250 to the Proposed FY 2026 budget to meet the proposed Assessment of the Groton Dunstable Regional School District. He explained that the base budget would be a balanced budget, with a contingent budget (based on the successful override of Proposition 2½ for the school district and adding additional Firefighters). By having the additional funding contingent on an override (after voting the Balanced Budget), we would not need to return to the Town Meeting if the overrides failed.

Mr. Cunningham made a motion to add a third override question to the Annual Town Election Ballot, in the amount of \$673,250 for the Groton Dunstable Regional School District Assessment. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion.

Discussion

Ms. Manugian inquired whether this would affect the level service budget with restoring the nurse and the guidance counselor. Mr. Haddad confirmed that the total of \$673,250 includes funding for both the nurse and the guidance counselor. He also explained that on Wednesday, March 12th, the School District will certify the District's budget.

The motion carried unanimously.

Diane Hewitt, a resident of 57 Long Hill Rd., stated that they have an optimal budget of funding six (6) Firefighters/EMTs and a less optimal budget of two (2) Firefighters/EMTs. She believes the school should also have a contingent budget, as well. Her main concern is that she would like to see the override questions combined.

Article 6: Fiscal Year 2026 Capital Budget –

Mr. Haddad stated that the Select Board has reviewed each capital item, all endorsed by the Capital Planning Committee. No questions were raised about any of the items.

Article 7: Community Preservation Funding Accounts

Mr. Haddad explained that this article is standard for allocating CPC funds to subaccounts, making the money available for Article 8: Community Preservation Funding recommendations. There were no questions.

Article 8: Community Preservation Funding Recommendations:

CPC Proposal A: West Groton Rail Trail- \$70,000

The West Groton Rail Trail is requesting \$70,000 to initiate the legal process of securing the rights to a section of the rail line from the river bordering Ayer to Cutler Field. This funding would be used for environmental filings. Mr. Cunningham stated it would cost approximately \$900,000 to construct roughly four miles of the trail, but he explained most of the funding they receive is from Mass Trails Grants.

CPC Proposal B: Conservation Fund- FY 2026-\$200,000

Mr. Haddad stated that the Conservation Commission has reduced their funding request from \$400,000 to \$200,000. This allows the Conservation Commission to have funds available to purchase property as it becomes available without needing a Town Meeting appropriation. Ms. DuFresne stated the current balance is \$962,000.

CPC Proposal C: FY 2026 Housing Funds Request- \$400,000

Ms. Pine stated that they submitted a request for \$400,000 and acknowledged that there is competition for funding this year; however, they are willing to accept whatever amount may be available. She explained that they are seeking funding to explore the option of working with a community development corporation to develop affordable housing. This corporation would purchase the property and handle the permitting process. They need to secure funding through the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the Commonwealth expects a contribution from the town as a show of support. Mr. Cunningham inquired about the current funding availability. Ms. Pine responded that \$400,000 was available last year and the year before that there was \$200,000 available.

CPC Proposal D: Cow Pond Brook Fields Improvements- \$100,000

The Town Manager's Office and the Park Commission had proposed a \$4.8 million plan for a complete renovation of the Cow Pond Brook Fields facility. The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) did not support taking on more debt in FY 2026. The Park Commission decided to reduce the request to \$100,000 to do more planning and allow the user groups more involvement in the planning process. The allocated \$100,000 will be used to hire a consultant to conduct preliminary design work with the Park Commission and user groups.

CPC Proposal E: Housing Coordinator FY 2026-\$63,401

This proposal pays the Housing Coordinator salary and benefits. Mr. Haddad said this is money well spent.

CPC Proposal F: Bancroft Castle Preservation- \$153,000

Mr. Aubrey Theall, Chair of the Historical Commission, was present. He said the Historical Commission put a proposal together to address the urgent repairs needed at the castle. There were no questions.

CPC Proposal G: Prescott Community Center-\$135,000

Ms. Megan Donovan, Director of Prescott, was present. She stated that Prescott is requesting \$135,000 for necessary historic renovations and various updates to make Prescott more usable for the community.

CPC Proposal H: Cow Pond Baseball Improvement-\$84,330

Mr. Haddad explained that the Groton-Dunstable Youth Baseball League, with the support of the Parks Commission, is requesting funding to remodel eight dugouts, renovate four batting cages, and rebuild the pitching mounds on all four baseball fields at the Cow Pond Brook Fields.

CPC Proposal I: Town Field Improvements- \$378,963

Mr. Haddad noted that the project was scaled down based on feedback received. This funding will renovate the major league baseball diamond at Town Field. The project builds upon a previously funded design study. It will include renovations to the infield, installation of new backstops, the placement of players' benches on concrete pads with chain-link fences, and reseeding of the outfield. Mr. Haddad stated that this is an excellent project, and he has met with the Groton Dunstable Youth Baseball and the designer to finalize the design.

CPC Proposal J: Curatorial Storage- \$62,675

Mr. Aubrey Theall explained this funding request is for temporary storage to improve conditions on the third floor of the Boutwell House.

CPC Proposal K: Williams Barn Restoration- \$158,972

Mr. Haddad stated that the Williams Barn Committee is seeking funding to renovate the historic structure, which is 185 years old. The barn requires several repairs, including work on the foundation wall, replacement of sills, gable end fascia, and soffit boards; two cracked support beams need to be replaced, and handrails should be added for safety.

Article 9: Proposed Amendments to the Groton Charter –

Mr. Haddad explained that they voted to have the Park Commission remain elected at last week's Charter Review Committee meeting. There will be one article for the Proposed Amendments to the Groton Charter. The proposal includes eleven amendments, eliminating the Personnel Board and allowing the Town Manager to appoint the Police Chief, Fire Chief, and Town Clerk subject to the Board's Policy. Mr. Haddad said a provision was added to allow a member of the Select Board to run for another elected Board.

Article 10: Act to Adopt Alternative Methods for Notice of Public Hearings-

Mr. Haddad explained that this act would allow the Town of Groton to adopt alternative methods for notifying the public about hearings. Seven other towns in Massachusetts have adopted this.

Article 11: Amend Chapter 81, "Town Meetings" of the Code of the Town of Groton-

This article sets the Town Election for the third Tuesday of May every year, aligning it with the Town of Dunstable.

Article 12: Disposition of Town Owned Landon Hoyts Warf Road-

This would allow the Affordable Housing Trust to develop Affordable Housing. Ms. Pine explained this article would authorize the Affordable Housing Trust to issue an RFP for the development of one lot. Ms. Manugian asked for a copy of the plan for the lot that would be disposed of. Ms. Pine said there would be an updated plan before the Spring Town Meeting.

Article 13: Amend Chapter 125, "Demolition Delay" of the Code of the Town of Groton-

Mr. Theall stated that this proposal was encouraged by the Massachusetts Historical Commission, which had consulted with the Historical Commission for preserving the Prescott House, though that effort was unsuccessful. The Historical Commission and Town Counsel worked together to review the Town's Demolition Delay Bylaw; Two amendments were made. He explained that the most significant change was extending the demolition delay period from 18 months to 24 months. Ms. Pine asked whether they had accepted the suggested edits from Town Counsel. Mr. Theall said they reviewed them and accepted the changes. Mr. Haddad will resend the red-lined changes for the Board's review. Ms. Manugian expressed that she would have difficulty supporting this change as it would delay too many properties for an extended period.

Article 14: Adopt Resolution- Reduce Statewide Greenhouse Gas Emissions-

Ms. Charlotte Weigel of the Sustainability Commission was present. Mr. Haddad explained the purpose of the article was to determine whether the Town would vote to adopt a resolution to reduce the Town's Greenhouse Emissions in compliance with State policy. He said the Select Board had previously voted to place this on the warrant. Ms. Weigel had to make revisions after working with the state and reviewed those changes with the Board. Ms. Weigel said this resolution was a goal, not a mandate. Mr. Haddad thanked Charlotte Weigel and Ken Horton for all of their efforts.

Article 15: Amend Flood Plain Zoning District-

The Town Planner, Mr. Takashi Tada, was present for the public hearing. He said that in January, the Town of Groton received a notice from FEMA stating that the new flood plain maps were finalized and official on July 8th. Mr. Tada said that municipalities have six months from the date of the letter to comply with the new requirements.

The first requirement is to update the Town's floodplain regulations. Mr. Tada explained that Groton has a Floodplain Overlay District in the zoning Bylaw. Two actions that need to be taken are: 1. Updating the reference in the Bylaw to the new maps, and 2. Adopting the relevant provisions of the Massachusetts Model Floodplain Bylaw.

If the Town complies within 6 months from January, then they would be eligible to remain a participant in the National Floodplain insurance program. The public hearing is open, and the Planning Board is working on strategies to promote it.

Article 16: Endorse Master Plan-

Mr. Tada said the Planning Board finalized and voted to approve the Groton Master Plan, which is required by the zoning act of state law. This article will be brought forward to vote to endorse the "Groton Master Plan" at the Town Meeting.

Article 17: MBTA Communities Multi-Family Overlay District (MCMOD)-

Mr. Tada explained that this is a requirement for Groton, as Groton is designated as an MBTA Community. Mr. Tada reviewed the article provided by the Planning Board, which would create a zoning overlay district in which multi-family developments may be allowed "as of right" at a maximum density of 15 units per acre. The zoning map for the Town of Groton will be amended to include the properties that fall within the Multi-Family Development Overlay District. The Planning Board will advertise another public hearing since the list of parcels may be incorrect. The updated map will be included in the Town Meeting handout.

Article 18: Accessory Dwelling Unit Amendments-

Mr. Tada said the purpose of this article is to make additional amendments to the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) provisions of the zoning bylaw to be fully consistent with the ADU regulations of the Affordable Homes Act.

Article 19: Accept Monarch Path as a Town Way-

Ebi Masalehdan, owner of Monarch Path, and Tom Delaney, DPW Director, were present for the public hearing. This article is to see if the Town will accept Monarch Path as a public way. Mr. Tada indicated that the Planning Board would need the final as-built plan sent to the Planning Board's consulting engineer, and then Monarch Path would be inspected. Mr. Delaney stated that he was comfortable with taking on the road. Mr. Masalehdan will send the final as-built with the requested information. A public hearing for the Road Acceptance will be scheduled for April 14, 2025.

Article 20: Citizens Petition-Town Wide Speed Limit-

Mr. Haddad stated that his office received a call from the proponent of the article requesting its removal. Mr. Haddad explained that it could be removed if the ten individuals who added their names to the citizen's petition signed the removal request. Mr. Cunningham announced that there would be a meeting with Destination Groton on Friday, March 21st, and their consultant, Stantec, to discuss a traffic study.

Mr. Haddad stated that Articles 21 through 31 will be presented as one motion.

Article 21: Funding For Destination Groton Committee-

The Destination Groton Committee members in attendance were Greg Sheldon, Jeff Gordon, Joni Parker Roach, and Brian Bolton. This article is to provide \$15,000 in funding for the Destination Groton Committee to carry out its charge.

Article 22: Funding For Sustainability Committee-

This is a placeholder.

Article 23: Transfer Within the Water Enterprise Fund-

This is a placeholder.

Article 24: Transfer Within the Sewer Enterprise Fund-
This is a placeholder.

Article 25: Transfer Within Four Corner Sewer Enterprise Fund-
The Four Corner Sewer Enterprise Fund will need to transfer \$20,000 to the Fiscal Year 2025 Four Corners Sewer Enterprise Department Budget.

Article 26: Prior Year Bills-
There are no bills for the prior year at this time. This is a placeholder.

Article 27: Current Year Line-Item Transfers-
Mr. Haddad presented the anticipated line-item transfers that will be brought to the Town Meeting. He reviewed the requests, which totaled \$173,000. He said that the transfers would come from health insurance funds. Town Accountant Patricia Dufresne explained that the line-item transfer list may change, as they are projections. Ms. Dufresne said that this process is done for transparency. Mr. Robertson and Ms. Pine stated that the transfers shouldn't be included in the Warrant if they can be handled at the end of the Fiscal Year by a vote of the Select Board and Finance Committee. Mr. Haddad said he would withdraw this article from the warrant.

Article 28: Appropriate Funding to Offset Snow and Ice Deficit-
Ms. DuFresne said they were currently in a deficit for Snow and Ice in the amount of \$91,000.

Article 29: Debt Service for the Middle School Track-
Ms. Hannah Moller stated that the amount to be transferred for debt service for FY 2025 for the Middle School Track Project is \$202,488, which is subject to change.

Article 30: Transfer Bond Proceeds-
Mr. Haddad said they want to transfer \$24,530.27 from the \$1,131,041 borrowed under Article 8 of the April 29, 2019, Spring Town Meeting for the Library Roof to the Florence Roche Elementary School Construction Project. This will lower the bond authorization by utilizing the library funds that have already been borrowed at a lower interest rate.

Article 31: Establishing Limits for Various Revolving Funds-
Mr. Haddad explained that this is an annual article to amend the Revolving Fund Bylaw to set the limits of the various revolving funds.

Article 32: Funding For the Repair of the Town Hall Sprinkler System-
Mr. Tom Delaney and Mr. Brian Callahan, the DPW Director in Training, were present. Mr. Delaney said that the Sprinkler System at Town Hall needs repairs due to rust in the pipes. A Bid has already gone out and a contractor was hired as this is an emergency.

Mr. Haddad respectfully requested the Board to close the public hearing on the warrant.

Mr. Cunningham made a motion to close the public hearing. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Robertson made a motion to close the public hearing. Mr. Green seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. The motion carried unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

Pursuant to the Charter, Authorize the Town Manager and One Member of the Select Board to Sign Warrants for the Next 30 days.

Ms. Pine made a motion to authorize the Town Manager and one member of the Select Board to sign the Warrants for the next 30 days. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Haddad explained that there are three override questions on the ballot. He noted that the Town Meeting is scheduled at the Performing Arts Center (PAC). He explained that holding the Town Meeting at the High School would cost approximately \$9,538 while keeping it at the PAC would cost around \$3,649. Mr. Haddad asked the Board whether they believed the Town Meeting should be held at the High School. The Board decided it should be held at the High School due to its larger capacity. The PAC accommodates 800 people, and the gymnasium at the High School can hold 1,700. They all agreed to change the location to the High School Gymnasium, which will take place on April 26th at 9:00 a.m.

SELECT BOARD LIASON REPORTS

None

On Going issues

- A. PFAS—Mr. Haddad explained that construction of the PFAS waterline is ongoing and has now started in the Town of Dunstable.
- B. Nashoba Valley Medical Center Working Group—The Nashoba Valley Medical Center Working Group's next meeting will be on Wednesday, March 12th.
- C. Charter Review Committee—The update was provided during the public hearing.
- D. PILOTs- No update

Approval of the Special Meeting/Joint Session Meeting Minutes of February 25, 2025.

Mr. Cunningham made a motion to approve the minutes of the special meeting/joint session with the Finance Committee of February 25, 2025. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Finance Committee member Mr. Manugian made a motion to approve the minutes of the special meeting/joint session with the Select Board. Ms. Linskey seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of the Regularly Scheduled Meeting Minutes of March 3, 2025.

The regularly scheduled meeting minutes of March 3, 2025, will be considered for approval at the March 24th Select Board meeting.

Executive Session

Mr. Haddad requested that the Board enter Executive Session Pursuant to M.G.L., c.30A, §21(a), Clause 3– “To conduct strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining to litigation position of the public body and the chair so declares.

And not to return to open session.

Select Board

Ms. Pine made a motion to enter into Executive Session. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. Roll Call: Pine-aye; Manugian-aye; Reilly-aye; Pisani-aye; Cunningham-aye.

Finance Committee

Mr. Green made a motion to enter into Executive Session. Mr. Manugian seconded the motion. Roll Call: Robertson-aye; Linskey-aye; Lengyel-aye; Whitefield-aye; Green-aye; Manugian-aye.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

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