



Town Manager
Mark W. Haddad

TOWN OF GROTON

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

Select Board

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

SELECT BOARD MEETING
MONDAY, JULY 14, 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 |
| | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Consider Ratifying the Town Manager's Appointments of Trevor Bettencourt, Anthony Yafrate, Joshua Consolo, Brody Duffy, Trevor Haggerty, Breacan Novak, Colin Werth and Colin O'Brien to the Groton Country Club Golf Staff and Layla Barie, Sarah Pudans and Grace Slocum as Groton Country Club Lifeguards2. Select Board Meeting Schedule Through Labor Day |
| II. 6:10 P.M. | Items for Select Board Consideration and Action |
| | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Call for and Open the Warrant for the 2025 Fall Town Meeting2. Consider Approving a One Day All Alcoholic Beverage License for the Friends of Prescott for an invite-only party for its supporters to be held on Wednesday, July 23, 2025, from 6:00 pm to 8:00 p.m. |
| III. 6:15 P.M. | Fire Chief Arthur Cheeks – Discussion on Services/Staffing Issues at Groton Fire Department |
| IV. 7:00 P.M. | In Joint Session with the Finance Committee – Review and Approve FY 2025 Line Item Transfers |
| OTHER BUSINESS | -Authorize the Town Manager and One Member of the Select Board to Sign Warrants for the Next Thirty Days |
| ON-GOING ISSUES – | Review and Informational Purposes – Brief Comments - Items May or May Not Be Discussed |
| | <ol style="list-style-type: none">A. PFAS IssueB. UMass Satellite Emergency FacilityC. PILOTS |

SELECT BOARD LIAISON REPORTS

- V. Minutes: Regularly Scheduled Meeting of June 30, 2025
- VI. Executive Session #1 – Pursuant to M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a), Clause 7 – “To comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special law and federal grant-in-aid requirements”
- Executive Session #2 – Pursuant to M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a), Clause 2 – “To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with Non-Union Personnel or conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with Non-Union Personnel”

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: *July 14, 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 Ongoing Issues List, there are three items scheduled on Monday's Agenda. First, Fire Chief Arthur Cheeks will be in to discuss a memorandum he sent to the Board concerning changes in service he is contemplating/implementing at the Fire Department due to staffing issues. Enclosed with this Report is the memorandum for your reference and review. Second, the Select Board will be meeting in Joint Session with the Finance Committee to review and consider approval of Fiscal Year 2025 Line Item Transfers. Also enclosed with this Report are the proposed Transfers for your review and consideration. Finally, we have scheduled two Executive Sessions for the end of Monday's meeting. The first Executive Session is for the Board to review, approve and consider the release of various Executive Session Minutes. The Second Executive Session is for the Board to prepare for contract negotiations with a non-union official. I have sent information relative to both these Executive Sessions to the Board under separate cover.

1. I have made the following appointments and would respectfully request that the Select Board consider ratifying them at Monday's Meeting: Trevor Bettencourt, Anthony Yafrate, Joshua Consolo, Brody Duffy, Trevor Haggerty, Brekan Novak, Colin Werth and Colin O'Brien to the Groton Country Club Golf Staff and Layla Barie, Sarah Pudans and Grace Slocum as Groton Country Club Lifeguards
2. Please see the update to the Select Board Meeting Schedule through Labor Day:

Monday, July 21, 2025 -	No Meeting
Monday, July 28, 2025 -	Regularly Scheduled Meeting

Continued on Next Page – Over >

Select Board
Weekly Agenda Update/Report
July 14, 2025
page two

2. Continued:

Monday, August 4, 2025 -	No Meeting
Monday, August 11, 2025 -	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, August 18, 2025 -	No Meeting
Monday, August 25, 2025 -	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, September 1, 2025 -	No Meeting (Labor Day Holiday)
Monday, September 8, 2025 -	Regularly Scheduled Meeting

ITEMS FOR SELECT BOARD CONSIDERATION AND ACTION

1. It is that time of year for the Select Board to call for the 2025 Fall Town Meeting. As you know, the default date for the meeting is the Third Monday in October (this year that date is October 20th). The Bylaw does allow the Board to choose another date in September, October or November with at least six weeks' notice to our residents. To that end, and given the success of Saturday Town Meetings, I am recommending that the Board call for the meeting on Saturday, October 18, 2024. Enclosed with this report is the proposed timeline for the meeting.
2. I would respectfully request that the Board approve a One Day All Alcoholic Beverages License for the Friends of Prescott for an invite-only party for its supporters to be held on Wednesday, July 23, 2025, from 6:00 pm to 8:00 p.m.

MWH/rjb
enclosures

Mark Haddad

From: Art Cheeks
Sent: Wednesday, June 25, 2025 4:39 PM
To: Matthew Pisani; Becky Pine; Alison Manugian; Peter Cunningham; John Reilly
Cc: Mark Haddad
Subject: GFD Change in Services
Attachments: GFD Changes in Services.docx

Members of the Town of Groton Select Board,

I write this email and the attached letter to you all in effort to be clear of what the immediate changes in services being made within the day to day operations.

The Groton Fire Department has continued to see a large increase in emergency requests and our staffing levels are in rough shape. Even today I was one of only 2 firefighter/EMTs covering the town and trying to cover two medicals, two inspections, and a fire call all between 8am and 10:30 am. Yesterday evening we have 4 calls going on at once. A reality that we made loud and clear to the boards and the town. I also just learned that I may be down a career staff member for possibly 3 months.

Some people think that the Deputy Chief starting and eventually the SEF are going to change the landscape. I am not afraid to tell you that those who are of that mindset are both naive and frankly, wrong. We have upstaffed for the majority of this fiscal year and have hung on... With the new year starting next week, we will no longer upstaff the department to ensure that everything is "covered". We need to focus on our duties as Firefighters and EMTs which means that many of the "extra" services we provide will be discontinued for the foreseeable future.

Please see the attached letter and I welcome any comments or questions. At this current pace we are a sinking ship and must think about how we can effectively obtain the staffing levels is needed. What is our plan moving forward?...

Chief Cheeks

Pride, Service, & Dedication



Art Cheeks
Fire Chief
Groton Fire Department
45 Farmers Row
Groton, MA 01450
acheeks@grotonma.gov
978-448-6333



Groton Fire Department

Fire ~ EMS ~ Rescue
"Together We Serve the Community"

45 Farmers Row
Groton, Massachusetts 01450
Tel: (978) 448-6333
Fax: (978) 448-1116



Members of the Town of Groton Select Board,

This year has been one of challenges not just for me as the new Fire Chief, but also for the Groton Fire Department in general. Who could have predicted the loss of the Nashoba Medical Center and the effects that it has created? While the loss of the hospital made a huge impact on the Fire Departments daily operations, what we did predict and what has been overtly stated on several occasions, is that the Fire Department's ability to continue to provide all services that we have has become very difficult.

The increasing number of times that we have seen simultaneous calls for service while trying to complete other mandated and community tasks has become an everyday problem. We need to take a step back and prioritize the services that we provide. More simply put, we need to prioritize emergency response and assistance first and foremost. Secondly, we need to continue to comply with State, Department of Public Health, and Office of Emergency Medical Service mandated activities, and lastly, we need to re-commit to a level of training that we have been known for. Allow me to break this down;

- All of our department members have taken an oath to provide emergency response for those who are sick, injured, requesting evaluation, treatment, and transport to the hospital. We have also made a commitment to respond to fires as well as all other hazardous incidents which include, motor vehicle accidents, fires and extrications, carbon monoxide incidents, search and rescue operations, water rescue operations, wildland fires, chemical releases, mental health related incidents, vehicle fires, active shooter incidents, as well as natural and man-made disasters. This list is always growing and we have made every effort to learn, train, and prepare for every type of incident that we may face. Many of these incidents are unpredictable thus we need to be ready at any given moment to respond, assess, and apply the appropriate level of response and resources to any of the aforementioned events.

- The State of Massachusetts, Department of Public Health, Office of Emergency Medical Services, and The Town of Groton Ordinances and Bylaws, dictate other required services that we need to provide. These include home sale inspections, new construction and development plan reviews and inspections, residential and commercial renovation plan reviews and inspections, solar and energy storage systems reviews, School inspections, fire and multi-hazard drills, Health care facility annual and quarterly inspections, medical documentation reviews and QA/QI, Ambulance and EMS licensure and certification reviews, and the list continues...
- To prepare, plan and have the proper knowledge, proficiency, resources, and capabilities to complete all activities listed above takes time and training. I can tell you that our daily training has become almost non-existent due to the increase in requests for our services. With that said however, we need to be able to keep our skills sharp. Training is the foundation of what we do and without it we then fall back to "just good enough."

Given the long list of duties highlighted above, as the Chief of the Groton Fire Department, it is my responsibility to take a hard look at and modify what extra services we provide and how we proceed given the large number of duties that we are responsible for.

Annually we provide Student Awareness of Fire Education (S.A.F.E.) for hundreds of the kindergarten and elementary age students within our town. This is not an activity that we are required to provide, however it is one that the Groton Fire Department has taken part in for a number of years. We have applied for and received state funding for many years. Due to both the increase in requests for service and the lack of staffing, I am proposing that the Groton Fire Department will no longer be able to provide this service. Currently, I have no other choice but to return the funding for this valuable educational resource back to the State.

We also provide a very popular S.A.F.E program for the senior residents of the Town. This program is also funded by the State, but at a much lower dollar amount than the school program. This is a program that I suggest we continue to provide. As we all should be aware, the 55 and older population has a higher risk of injury and incidents due to fire. This program allows our firefighters and EMTs the opportunity to meet senior residents in their homes to review fire safety and to provide assessments and installation, if needed, of smoke or carbon monoxide detectors in the homes. Again, despite the staffing shortage and increased call volumes, this program is one I believe should remain.

We receive numerous requests to provide CPR & AED training for the schools, Center of Groton Van Drivers, and several other groups. This takes extra time and personnel costs to accomplish. There is also the administrative portion to complete the paperwork needed to provide the appropriate documentation for the certifications. Discontinuing this service would mean that Teachers, Paraprofessionals, students wishing to be employed as babysitters and other public groups in the community would need to find and pay for alternative training centers to obtain these certifications.

With a growing community and the increasing number of young families in the town, we also have been providing car seat installation services at no cost. These appointments not only take a firefighter away from responding to emergency calls for service, but they also have an administration portion to the service that requires documentation stating not only that the car seat was properly installed by a certified car seat technician, but also that the car seat and the vehicle itself meet the required specifications. Given the lack of staffing and the need to reduce overtime expenditures, it is my decision to discontinue the car seat installation program. We currently schedule home sales, oil burner & tank, propane tank installation, fire drills and other inspections on Tuesdays and Thursdays throughout the typical business hours of 8:30am through 4:00pm. We have been hit hard with the need to reschedule these appointments which impacts closing dates, occupancy permits, building rough and final inspections. The Groton Fire Department has always been accommodating to the contractors, realtors, sellers and buyers in our scheduling.

Given the staffing issues that we are facing coupled again with the call volumes, we need to take a stance and conduct the inspections when we have the staffing to meet those appointments. Yes, this will be an inconvenience to those conducting the business, but we need to make it understood to the community that the Groton Fire Department is not able to accommodate appointments as we have in the past. We will do our best to schedule the appointments a couple of weeks in advance once we can confirm that we have a full complement of staff for that day. There are a couple options that I feel may make sense in our situation:

- Option one: consolidate the inspections within a specific window of time on Tuesday and/or Thursday mornings.
- Option two: based on availability, dedicate a single weekday for the inspections to occur, while also capping the number the number of inspections that can be accomplished in the day.

For inspections that span multiple days, i.e. the pre-opening of school inspections for both Lawrence Academy, Groton School, and the Groton-Dunstable School buildings; each school liaison will be notified as to when the inspections will take place so that we can ensure a proper level of coverage to the town and what is needed to complete the inspection. Special consideration will be given to provide ample time for areas of correction to be remedied and reinspected if needed.

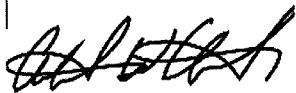
There are numerous other programs and community engagements that the Groton Fire Department takes part in. Veteran's breakfasts, Senior cookouts, Easter breakfast, Santa Claus rides on Christmas Eve, numerous committees and impromptu meetings, Emergency Management activities, High School Senior Internship Program, and our desperately needed constant recruitment for call/volunteer members. We believe in the Groton Community and have made every effort to continue providing all services. These efforts have come at a huge cost.

There has been an increased need to reschedule, cancel attendance, or leave in the middle of these programs so that we can tend to our primary jobs.

It is my duty as the Groton Fire Chief to maintain the day-to-day operations of the fire department. This means that we need to prioritize and restructure what services we provide and what we need to discontinue. Unfortunately, there is no way to continue the course that we are currently on without sustaining an explosion to our overtime budget, and in these times where we need to minimize excess spending, cutting back non-essential services is the result.

I welcome any discussion on this topic; however, I see no way to ensure that these programs continue without increased staffing. If you were to go to the Groton Fire Department website you will read this statement in our department overview; "*The members of the Groton Fire Department pride themselves in the quality of services delivered to the community.*" We are losing our fight to continue to provide this quality service. It is my hope that in writing this letter to the board you will gain a better understanding of the adjustments needed to continue to provide consistent emergency services to the Town of Groton.

Art Cheeks

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Art Cheeks', with a vertical line above it.

Fire Chief
Town of Groton.

PROPOSED LINE ITEM TRANSFERS FOR YEAR END 2025

Ledger Number	Account	FUNDING NEEDED (Line Items in Deficit)			Notes
		Original Amount 3/5/2025	Adj. & New	Final Transfer Totals	
5400	124 Town Mgr Expenses		(10,000)	(10,000)	DPW Bldg Plaque
5115	141 Assessors Salaries	(2,500)		(2,500)	Stipend not budgeted
5120	141 Assessors Wages		(109)	(109)	
5120	135 Accounting Wages	(223)	(1)	(224)	Personnel Turnover
5115	145 Treasurer/Collector Salaries	(516)		(516)	Longevity/Hi Opt Out increases
5420	145 Bond Counsel	(3,150)	(2,250)	(5,400)	SRF Interim Loan Prep
5220	151 Town Counsel	(25,000)	(7,000)	(32,000)	Arbitration/Mirick O'Connell
5120	154 IT Wages		(88)	(88)	
5115	161 Town Clerk Salaries	(\$1,836)		(\$1,836)	VBB not budgeted
5400	162 Elections Expenses		(\$17,000)	(\$17,000)	LHS Voting Tabulators EW27
5400	171 Conservation Commission		(\$5,000)	(\$5,000)	Legal Bills/Portable Restrooms Williams Barn
5115	175 Planning Board Salaries	(\$750)	(\$1)	(\$751)	Longevity
5430	173 Insurance & Bonding		(\$980)	(\$980)	Bond Renewals/Ins Cert Fire Dept
5115	210 Police Salaries	(\$2,515)	\$2,515	\$0	
5120	220 Fire Wages	(\$100,000)	\$57,180	(\$42,820)	OT/Shift Coverage
5120	241 Building Insp Wages	(\$2,418)	\$958	(\$1,460)	
5400	241 Building Insp General Expenses		(\$1,200)	(\$1,200)	
5115	242 Mechanical Inspector Salaries		(\$6,510)	(\$6,510)	
5400	292 Dog Officer		(\$120)	(\$120)	
5130	423 Snow & Ice		(\$2,550)	(\$2,550)	Winter Storm Activity
5471	430 Tipping Fees	(\$10,000)		(\$10,000)	
5115	541 COA Salaries	(\$5,170)	(\$1)	(\$5,171)	
5400	541 COA General Expenses		(\$7,000)	(\$7,000)	Purchase of Blinds
5120	542 COA Van Wages		(\$1,213)	(\$1,213)	
5115	640 Library Salaries	(\$3,679)	\$1,504	(\$2,175)	New HI Opt Out
5400	610 Library Expenses	(\$9,000)	\$1,383	(\$7,617)	Drinking Fountains/Water Bill
5115	640 Country Club Salaries	(\$23,000)	\$1,000	(\$22,000)	Personnel Turnover
5120	640 Country Club Wages	(\$25,000)	(\$9,370)	(\$34,370)	Programming
5400	640 Country Club Expenses	(\$3,014)	(\$30,636)	(\$33,650)	CC Function Hall Bathroom Repairs 11A
5115	660 Cable Salaries		(\$3)	(\$3)	
5400	692 Commemorations & Celebrations		(\$59)	(\$59)	Parade Flowers
5173	916 Town Share Medicare	(\$6,000)	\$6,000	\$0	
TOTAL PROJECTED DEFICITS (ESTIMATED)		(\$223,771)	(\$30,551)	(\$254,322)	
				-\$254,322 xft	
FUNDING FROM (Line Items with Surplus)					
5120	124 Town Manager Wages		10,000	\$10,000	
5400	135 Accounting General Expense	\$223		\$223	
5400	158 Tax Title Foreclosure	\$3,150		\$3,150	
5451	193 Insurance Deductible Reserve	\$15,000	(\$9,000)	\$6,000	
5115	220 Fire Salaries	\$50,000	\$10,000	\$60,000	
5120	420 Highway Wages	\$27,244	(\$27,244)	\$0	
5200	430 Solid Waste Consulting		\$5,850	\$5,850	
5120	541 COA Wages	\$20,000	(\$14,830)	\$5,170	
5120	610 Library Wages	\$3,679	\$6,321	\$10,000	
5400	913 Unemployment Benefits	\$5,000	(\$5,000)	\$0	
5435	914 Employee Health Insurance	\$220,000	(\$66,071)	\$153,929	
TOTAL SURPLUS FUNDS (ESTIMATED)		\$344,296	-\$89,974	\$254,322	
				\$254,322 xft	
Net Transfer				\$0	



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Town Manager
Mark W. Haddad

To: *All Departments, Boards, Committees and Commissions*

From: *Mark W. Haddad, Town Manager*

Subject: *Fall Town Meeting- October 18, 2025*

Date: *July 15, 2025*

Please be advised that at the regularly scheduled meeting of the Select Board held on Monday, July 14, 2025, the Board voted to open the Warrant for the 2025 Fall Town Meeting to be held on Saturday, October 18, 2025. The Warrant will close at the close of business on Thursday, August 22, 2025.

All articles should be submitted in writing to the Select Board as soon as possible to allow for as much time for legal and financial review. All articles should be submitted with a written summary. These summaries will be included in the Fall Town Meeting Warrant so they must be submitted with the proposed Article. The following is the timeline:

Monday, July 14, 2025 -	Warrant for 2025 Fall Town Meeting Opens
Thursday, August 21, 2025 -	Warrant for 2025 Fall Town Meeting Closes
Monday, August 25, 2025 -	Select Board conducts first review of Articles
Monday, September 15, 2025 -	SB - FINCOM Public Hearing on Articles
Monday, September 29, 2025 -	Select Board finalizes Warrant
Friday, October 3, 2025 -	Post Warrant
Saturday, October 18, 2025 -	2025 Fall Town Meeting

As has been the case in the past, please plan on attending any meeting of the Select Board in which they review an article you have submitted. I will provide all Departments, Boards, Committees and Commissions with a schedule once it is developed.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please feel free to contact me with any additional questions or concerns.

MWH/rjb

cc: Select Board
Dawn Dunbar - Town Clerk
Jason Kauppi - Town Moderator
Brian Falk - Town Counsel

**SELECT BOARD HYBRID MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, JUNE 30, 2025
UN-APPROVED**

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

Select Board Members Virtually Present: Becky Pine, Vice Chair;

Also Present: Mark Haddad, Town Manager; Kara Cruikshank, Executive Assistant to the Town Manager; Bud Robertson, Finance Committee Chair; Patricia DuFresne, Town Accountant; Tom Orcutt, Groton Water Superintendent; Megan Foster, Principal Assessor; Greg Sheldon, Jeff Gordon, Joni Parker Roach, Brian Bolton, Destination Groton Committee Members; Karen Tucker Barisano, Destination Groton Sub-Committee Member.

Chair Pisani called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and reviewed the agenda.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Cunningham announced that the Fourth of July fireworks will take place on Monday, July 7th, at Town Field. Mr. Haddad mentioned that construction of the new major league diamond at Town Field will begin after the fireworks event.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

None

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. **Consider Ratifying the Town Manager's Appointment of Ambrose Harriman, Caroline Chaland, and Syndney Bain as Groton Country Club Lifeguards; Matthew Lesser to the Groton Country Club Camp Staff; and Shuan Wagner to the Civilian Traffic Unit.**

Mr. Cunningham made a motion to ratify the Town Manager's Appointment of Ambrose Harriman, Caroline Chaland, and Syndney Bain as Groton Country Club Lifeguards; Matthew Lesser to the Groton Country Club Camp Staff; and Shuan Wagner to the Civilian Traffic Unit. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. Roll Call: Manugian-aye; Pine-aye; Cunningham-aye; Pisani-aye; Reilly-aye.

2. **Finalize and Approve the Town Manager's Recommendation on PILOTs.**

Mr. Haddad explained that the Attorney General's Office ruled on the Open Meeting Law Complaint filed by Paul Fitzgerald, stating that the Town Manager is allowed to hold Working Group Meetings and that there was no violation of the Open Meeting Law. He emphasized that this was an important issue, as Town Manager Working Group meetings are held frequently.

Mr. Haddad explained that at the previous Select Board meeting, he presented a recommendation on how to address the PILOTs moving forward. He recommended that the Board vote to take no action on the Report of the Working Group and direct him to continue engaging with the Non-Profit Partners, as he has since 2008, with an emphasis on cooperation, goodwill, and respect. Ms. Manugian had requested that Mr. Haddad provide a comparison showing what the Town has

received in Fiscal Year 2025 versus what it would have been under the PILOT Working Group's recommendation of a PILOT based on 15% of their assessed value. Mr. Haddad presented a comparison of PILOTs for FY 2024 and FY 2025 to the Board and reviewed it. He explained that the Town received \$435,058 in PILOTs for FY 2024 and \$478,629 for FY 2025. The chart indicated that if they implemented the PILOTs at 15% of the property values, it would total \$1,271,592, resulting in a difference of \$832,693, or a 10% increase.

Mr. Haddad requested direction from the Board on how to proceed.

Comments/Suggestions

Mr. Haddad informed the Board that he had Kara Cruikshank contact communities in which UMass Memorial Hospital has facilities to inquire if they paid a PILOT to those communities. Thus far, they do not pay a PILOT to those communities. Mr. Cunningham said he would support his recommendation, but moving forward, he would like Mr. Haddad to emphasize the Town's hardships to the Non-Profits, hoping they would feel compelled to contribute more. Mr. Haddad explained that he will schedule meetings with Groton's Non-Profit Partners over the summer and continue his collaboration with them.

Mr. Reilly wished all Non-Profit Partners would give a percentage increase annually, similar to the one at Groton School.

Ms. Pine agreed with everything discussed. She said that resident Mr. Paul Fitzgerald suggested setting a percentage goal as part of the Select Board's Goals, and she was unsure whether that should be implemented. Ms. Pine said they have had success with the variety of strategies used over the years.

Ms. Manugian agreed with everyone, but her main concern was for students from the private schools attending the Groton-Dunstable schools. She would like to explore a way for some PILOT funding to be allocated directly from private schools to the Regional School District. She would like to arrange a meeting with the GDRSD Superintendent and the private schools. She believes it's important to address this issue directly with the schools to help reduce tuition costs and other related expenses.

Mr. Cunningham made a motion to accept the recommendation to continue down the path, similar to the one taken over the last several years. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Manugian-aye; Pine-aye; Cunningham-aye; Pisani-aye; Reilly-aye.

6:15 P.M. Destination Groton Committee-Update on Town Center Visioning.

Destination Groton Committee members Brian Bolton, Joni Parker Roach, Jeff Gordon, and Greg Sheldon attended, along with subcommittee member Karen Tucker Barisano. The members were there to provide an update on their Town-Wide Center Visioning initiative and the work they have accomplished so far under the \$50,000 grant received from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Mr. Sheldon walked the Board through a PowerPoint presentation outlining the year's accomplishments and goals. He explained that the Destination Groton Committee (DGC) is in the early stages of a visioning process. The goal is to submit a final ten-year vision plan that creates a viable, walkable Town Center experience for Groton, while encouraging potential alternative development sites around the Town. This process also supports the goals of the Master Plan. The DGC shared a timeline for their Town Center Vision Plan and addressed current questions.

Board Questions/Comments

Ms. Manugian asked where she could find the information. The members responded that it was preliminary. Mr. Gordon stated that they planned to meet with different committees first, then return to the Select Board. Mr. Cunningham asked if the presentation could be made publicly available. The members said that it absolutely could. Ms. Pine clarified that money coming into the regional economy is not the same as local revenue. Mr. Gordon said that hearing public input on what they can and can't do, so they don't change the town's character, was important feedback to receive.

Public Comments

Ms. Julie Andrews of 17 Station Avenue expressed her disappointment that the residents of Station Avenue have not yet been contacted. Mr. Gordon said they do not have enough information to discuss potential plans. They have just hired a consultant, and the DGC will gather public input through a forum. Ms. Andrews thanked the Board. Mr. Sheldon said this was a vision exercise, and they want to be transparent. Ms. Parker Roach said these were just ideas and that they are for the entire Town Center, not just Station Avenue.

Mr. Pisani expressed his appreciation for all the work the Destination Groton Committee does and wants to ensure they don't get discouraged in their efforts.

3. Proposed Select Board Meeting Schedule through Labor Day.

Monday, July 7, 2025	No Meeting
Monday, July 14, 2025	Regularly Scheduled Meeting (L.I. Transfers/Call for FTM)
Monday, July 21, 2025	No Meeting
Monday, July 28, 2025	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, August 4, 2025	No Meeting
Monday, August 11, 2025	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, August 18, 2025	No Meeting
Monday, August 25, 2025	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, September 1, 2025	No Meeting (Labor Day)
Monday, September 8, 2025	Regularly Scheduled Meeting

ITEMS FOR SELECT BOARD CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL

1. Vote to Dispose of Playground Equipment at Prescott School.

As discussed at the June 9th Select Board Meeting, Mr. Haddad advertised the disposal of surplus playground equipment behind Prescott School. The only interest came from Grotonwood, which is

willing to remove the equipment at its own expense. Based on this, Mr. Haddad respectfully asked that the Board authorize him to dispose of the equipment by allowing Grotonwood to remove it.

Mr. Haddad stated that Ms. Manugian had asked him whether they would provide liability insurance, listing the Town as additional insured, and he replied that they would be. Ms. Manugian also inquired about the removal of the foundation cement structures that support their equipment, and he informed her that the Department of Public Works (DPW) would need to handle that removal.

Mr. Cunningham made a motion to authorize the disposal of the equipment to Grotonwood. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. Roll Call: Manugian-aye; Pine-aye; Cunningham-aye; Pisani-aye; Reilly-aye.

2. Update Meetings on Holiday Policy

While reviewing the Town's various Policies, the Town Clerk noticed that the Meetings on Holiday Policy needs updating to include Juneteenth and change Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples' Day. Mr. Haddad provided the revised Policy to the Board (see attached to these minutes).

Mr. Haddad respectfully requested that the Board waive the Policy that requires bringing back policies and policy amendments to another meeting for approval consideration.

Mr. Cunningham made a motion to waive the Policy and allow the Board to consider approving the proposed changes at the same meeting that it is presented. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. Roll Call: Manugian-aye; Pine-aye; Cunningham-aye; Pisani-aye; Reilly-aye.

Mr. Cunningham made a motion to amend the Policy as presented. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. Roll Call: Manugian-aye; Pine-aye; Cunningham-aye; Pisani-aye; Reilly-aye.

Discussion

Ms. Pine noted that the Board was supposed to review the Policy annually. She suggested not holding a Select Board meeting on Rosh Hashanah.

3. Review and Approve Liaison Assignments for FY 2026.

Mr. Haddad provided the Board with the Liaison Assignments. The Select Board did not recommend any changes (see the attached document) and left all Liaison assignments the same.

4. Consider Approving a One Day All Alcoholic Beverages License for the Groton Business Association for GrotonFest to be held on Saturday, September 27, 2025, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The Groton Business Association will return for consideration at a later date.

6:30 P.M. PFAS Issue at Groton Dunstable Regional High School- Update from Town Manager

Groton Water Superintendent Mr. Tom Orcutt was in attendance for the discussion.

Mr. Haddad stated during the last meeting that he had provided the Board with an update on some potential issues the Town may be facing regarding the PFAS issue at the high school. He reviewed the Map provided by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), which identifies impacted properties related to the spread of the PFAS plume. Mr. Haddad explained that he held a meeting with Mr. Orcutt, Apex engineers, and representatives from the Town of Pepperell. During the meeting, the Town asked if Pepperell would be willing to expedite the Phase Two work to include the connection from the Jersey Street well to the pipe on North Street. They also inquired about the possibility of starting the extension on Groton Street to address impacted properties. Mr. Haddad stated that they agreed to start the work. The Town of Pepperell is also open to hiring Groton's engineers, Apex. The Town of Groton will handle the design work, and the Town of Pepperell will reimburse Groton for these expenses. Town Counsel will draft an amendment to the IMA between Groton, Dunstable and Pepperell for Select Board consideration and approval.

Mr. Haddad said another question was raised about whether the Town Meeting appropriation can be used for the additional work without having to return to Town Meeting. Mr. Haddad stated that he had received confirmation from Bond Counsel that it was indeed the case. The Select Board can authorize the \$4 million for the next Phase.

Additionally, Mr. Haddad raised another issue with the Board regarding whether procurement laws permit issuing a negative change order to DeFelice. This change would involve removing the paving from DeFelice and having the Department of Public Works (DPW) complete the work instead. This would result in significant savings. He said that, due to the timing of the award and various changes throughout the year, Town Counsel was comfortable with the Town proceeding with this specific matter.

Ms. Manugian had provided Mr. Haddad with a few questions to have addressed by the Licensed Site Professional (LSP). Mr. Haddad contacted the LSP to ask whether there is a way to determine if the plume affects properties south of the High School or if they are affected by their private wells. The LSP explained that it is impossible to make this distinction and stated that there is no significant difference between the PFAS levels resulting from the firefighting foam. Mr. Haddad also asked the LSP when this would come to an end, as the plume continues to spread. The LSP responded that several steps need to be taken before it can come to an end, which may take two to three years. Mr. Orcutt responded that the sooner Town water is provided, the quicker they can close the project.

Apex provided a cost estimate for Phase Three of the project at approximately \$4 million, which is subject to bidding and design. Mr. Haddad explained that the Town Meeting approved \$16.8 million for the project, with \$12.2 million already spent. There is \$500,000 remaining in SRF funding and \$4.5 million left from the Warrant Article to be spent on the project. Mr. Haddad stated that if the Town had to make the individual connections to impacted properties, they would have to pay prevailing wages, which would cost approximately \$1.5 million. He asked the Town Counsel whether it would be permissible for the Town to reimburse private residences to avoid paying the prevailing wages. The Groton Water Commission will identify approved drain layers, and Mr. Orcutt will estimate the per-foot cost for laying the pipe, closing out their well, and making the connection. He will also provide a maximum reimbursement amount per property. Mr. Haddad mentioned that there are 79 properties involved and providing reimbursement will reduce the anticipated cost. Additionally, if the Department of Public Works (DPW) handles the paving, it

would also provide funds to cover the cost of the individual connections. Town Counsel stated that the Town could just reimburse the homeowners.

Mr. Haddad summarized how the funding is distributed for each phase of the project between Groton and the Town of Dunstable. He said that he is currently negotiating Dunstable's contribution for Phase Three. Mr. Haddad emphasized that they have no choice but to proceed, as the PFAS contamination is spreading and the federal government is providing less funding. It is unlikely they will receive another grant for this. The Town will need to work with DeFelice to process a change order for the paving, which Mr. Haddad indicated would be subject to negotiation.

Ms. Manugian indicated that homeowners will need to pay a significant amount of money out of pocket. Ms. Pine recommended that Mr. Haddad speak with the Commissioners of Trust Funds regarding available funding. She thanked Mr. Haddad for his work on this issue and expressed her support for moving forward with the project and suggested clarifying that it does not affect the entire Reedy Meadow Road.

Mr. Haddad stated that, with the Board's approval, he will proceed and return to the Board with the proposed IMA amendment with Pepperell and Dunstable. He will also provide a final cost estimate for the drain layers and the estimated reimbursement costs. Additionally, he will send out a letter to the abutters to inform them of the process. Mr. Orcutt will update the webpage with the information provided.

The Select Board approved Mr. Haddad to proceed with pursuing the Phase Three path.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

Ongoing issues

- A. PFAS Issue- Previously discussed.
- B. UMass Satellite Emergency Facility- Mr. Haddad explained that they are before the Planning Board and Stormwater Committee on July 17. Also, a site walk will take place on July 7 with the Conservation Committee.
- C. PILOTs- Previously discussed.

SELECT BOARD LIASON REPORTS

None.

Approval of the Special Meeting of June 10, 2025, Regularly Scheduled Meeting of June 16, 2025, and Special Meeting of June 23, 2025

Ms. Pine made a motion to approve the Special Meeting of June 10, 2025, the Regular Meeting of June 16, 2025, and the Special Meeting of June 23, 2025. Mr. Manugian seconded the motion. Roll Call: Manugian-aye; Pine-aye; Cunningham-aye; Pisani-aye; Reilly-aye.

The meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

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