



**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

Peter S. Cunningham, *Chair*  
Rebecca H. Pine, *Vice Chair*  
Nicholas J. Degaitas, Jr., *Clerk*  
John F. Reilly, *Member*  
Matthew F. Pisani, *Member*

### SELECT BOARD MEETING

MONDAY, AUGUST 17, 2026

#### AGENDA

#### SELECT BOARD MEETING ROOM

2nd FLOOR

GROTON TOWN HALL

6:00 P.M. Announcements and Review Agenda for the Public

6:05 P.M. Public Comment Period – Zoom ID (Public Comment Only) – 843 9402 7845 Passcode - 103135

I. 6:06 P.M. Town Manager's Report

1. Deputy Chief Mead – Flock Camera Working Group Update
2. Fiscal Year 2028 Budget Update
3. Ratify the Town Manager's Appointment of Anna Eliot to the Historical Commission
4. Update on Select Board Meeting Schedule through the Labor Day

II. 6:10 P.M. Items for Select Board Consideration and Action

1. Review First Draft of the 2026 Fall Town Meeting Warrant
2. Approve Letter to Community Preservation Committee in Support of the Cow Pond Brook Fields Project

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

- A. PFAS Issue
- B. UMass Satellite Emergency Facility
- C. Fire Department Staffing
- D. West Groton Dam Removal
- E. Main Street Study
- F. Flock Cameras

### SELECT BOARD LIAISON REPORTS

III. Minutes: Special Meeting of July 16, 2025  
Regularly Scheduled Meeting of July 27, 2026

### 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.



## TOWN OF GROTON

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

## Select Board

Peter S. Cunningham, *Chair*  
Rebecca H. Pine, *Vice Chair*  
Nicholas J. Degaitas, Jr., *Clerk*  
John F. Reilly, *Member*  
Matthew F. Pisani, *Member*

**Town Manager**  
Mark W. Haddad

**To:** *Select Board*

**From:** *Mark W. Haddad – Town Manager*

**Subject:** *Weekly Agenda Update/Report*

**Date:** *August 17, 2026*

### TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Other than the Town Manager's Report, Items for Select Board Consideration and Action and a review of the On-going Issues List, there is nothing specifically scheduled on Monday's Agenda.

1. At the request of Select Board Chair Cunningham, I have invited Deputy Chief Mead to Monday's meeting to update the Board on the work of the Police Camera Working Group.
2. With regard to the Fiscal Year 2028 Budget Update, I have no specific update at this time. I will update the Board at the meeting with any necessary update.
3. The Historical Commission has requested that I appoint Anna Eliot to the Commission to fill a vacancy. I have made this appointment. I would respectfully request that the Board consider ratifying this appointment at Monday's meeting for a term through June 30, 2027.
4. Please see the update to the Meeting Schedule that will take the Board through Labor Day:

Monday, August 24, 2026 -  
Monday, August 31, 2026 -  
Monday, September 7, 2026 -  
Monday, September 14, 2026 -

No Meeting  
Public Hearing on the Fall Town Meeting Warrant  
No Meeting (Labor Day Holiday)  
Issue the Warrant for the Fall Town Meeting

**Select Board**  
**Weekly Agenda Update/Report**  
**August 17, 2026**  
**page two**

**ITEMS FOR SELECT BOARD CONSIDERATION AND ACTION**

1. Enclosed with this Report is the First Draft of the 2026 Fall Town Meeting Warrant as of August 6, 2026. Please note that the Warrant closes on August 13, 2026 at the close of business. Since I am on vacation for the next week, I wanted to get the Board a draft of the Warrant as soon as possible. I will update the Warrant with any additional articles that come in by the deadline (I know of one potential Citizens' Petition) and provide it to the Board under separate cover. I would like to take some time at Monday's meeting reviewing this Draft with the Board.
2. Enclosed with this Report is a letter I drafted to the Community Preservation Committee in support of the Cow Pond Brook Fields Project. I would respectfully request that the Board consider approving this letter and authorizing the Select Board Chair to sign. I do appreciate the Board's consideration of this request.

MWH/rjb  
enclosure

## Warrant, Summary, and Recommendations

# TOWN OF GROTON



## 2026 FALL TOWN MEETING

Marion Stoddart Building Auditorium  
344 Main Street, Groton, Massachusetts 01450

Beginning Saturday, October 3, 2026 @ 9:00 AM

---

Attention Voters  
Please bring this Document to Town Meeting

# Introduction to Groton Town Meeting

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

## What is Town Meeting?

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

## What is a warrant?

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

## How does Town Meeting proceed?

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

---

<sup>1</sup> *Town Meeting Time: A Handbook of Parliamentary Law* (page 19) Massachusetts Moderators Association, Fourth Edition, 2024.

<sup>2</sup> *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 Marion Stoddart Building. There is a ramp providing access from the parking lot to the front door of the Building.

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

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

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

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

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

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

**FALL TOWN MEETING WARRANT  
OCTOBER 3, 2026**

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 Marion Stoddart Building Auditorium, 344 Main Street, Groton, Massachusetts in said Town on Saturday, the third day of October, 2026 at Nine O'clock in the morning, to consider the following:

**ARTICLE LISTINGS**

|                   |                                                                        |    |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| <b>Article 1*</b> | Prior Year Bills                                                       | 6  |
| <b>Article 2*</b> | Amend the Fiscal Year 2027 Town Operating Budget                       | 6  |
| <b>Article 3*</b> | Transfer Money Into Capital Stabilization Fund                         | 6  |
| <b>Article 4*</b> | Transfer Money Into Stabilization Fund                                 | 7  |
| <b>Article 5*</b> | Transfer Money Into the GDRSD Capital Stabilization Fund               | 7  |
| <b>Article 6*</b> | Transfer Within the Water Enterprise Fund                              | 8  |
| <b>Article 7*</b> | Transfer Within the Sewer Enterprise Fund                              | 8  |
| <b>Article 8*</b> | Transfer Within the Stormwater Enterprise Fund                         | 8  |
| <b>Article 9*</b> | Appropriation to Fund Town Forest Expenses                             | 9  |
| <b>Article 10</b> | Install Irrigation System/Course Improvements – Groton Country Club    | 9  |
| <b>Article 11</b> | CPA Project - Cow Pond Brook Fields Improvements                       | 10 |
| <b>Article 12</b> | Establish Means-Tested Senior Citizen Property Tax Exemption           | 10 |
| <b>Article 13</b> | Small Scale Clean Energy Infrastructure Facility Siting and Permitting | 13 |
| <b>Article 14</b> | Small Scale Ground Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Facilities               | 15 |
| <b>Article 15</b> | Citizens' Petition – Senior Property Tax Freeze Program                | 19 |
|                   |                                                                        |    |
|                   |                                                                        |    |
|                   |                                                                        |    |
|                   |                                                                        |    |
|                   |                                                                        |    |
|                   |                                                                        |    |
|                   |                                                                        |    |
|                   |                                                                        |    |
|                   |                                                                        |    |
|                   |                                                                        |    |
|                   | Report of the Town Manager to the 2025 Fall Town Meeting               |    |
|                   | Appendix A – Proposed Amendments to the Groton Charter                 |    |
|                   |                                                                        |    |

\*Will be presented as one motion as a Consent Agenda

**Article 1:      *Prior Year Bills***

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds a sum or sums of money for the payment of unpaid bills from prior fiscal years, or to take any other action relative thereto.

***Select Board***

**Select Board:**  
**Finance Committee:**

**Summary:**      *Town Meeting approval is required to pay bills from a prior fiscal year. A list of unpaid bills will be provided at Town Meeting. Please see the Town Manager's Report starting on page \_\_ for additional information related to this Article.*

---

**Article 2:      *Amend the Fiscal Year 2027 Town Operating Budget***

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Fiscal Year 2027 Operating Budget as adopted under Article 5 of the May 2, 2026 Spring Town Meeting, and vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds a sum or sums of money as may be necessary to defray the expenses of the Town for Fiscal Year 2027, or to take any other action relative thereto.

***Finance Committee***  
***Select Board***  
***Town Manager***

**Select Board:** *See Select Board's Recommendations Beginning on Page \_\_*  
**Finance Committee:** *See Finance Committee's Recommendations Beginning on Page \_\_*

**Summary:**      *The Fiscal Year 2027 Town Operating Budget was approved at the May 2, 2026 Town Meeting. Any changes to this Budget would have to be made prior to setting the tax rate. The purpose of this article is to make any necessary changes to balance the Fiscal Year 2027 Operating Budget. Please see the Town Manager's Report starting on page \_\_ for additional information related to this Article.*

---

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

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, and/or borrow, pursuant to any applicable statute, a sum or sums of money to be added to the sum already on deposit in the Capital Stabilization Fund, or to take any other action relative thereto.

***Select Board***

**Select Board:**  
**Finance Committee:**

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

---

**Article 4: Transfer Money into the Stabilization Fund**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, and/or borrow, pursuant to any applicable statute, a sum or sums of money to be added to the sum already on deposit in the Stabilization Fund, or to take any other action relative thereto.

**Select Board**

**Select Board:**  
**Finance Committee:**

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

---

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

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, and/or borrow, pursuant to any applicable statute, a sum or sums of money to be added to the sum already on deposit in the Town of Groton Capital Stabilization Fund for the Groton Dunstable Regional School District, or to take any other action relative thereto.

**Town Manager**

**Select Board: Recommended Unanimously**  
**Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously**

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

---

**Article 6:      *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 2027 Water Enterprise Budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

***Board of Water Commissioners***

**Select Board:**

**Finance Committee:**

**Summary:**      *This Article will seek a transfer from the Water Enterprise Fund Surplus to the Fiscal Year 2027 Water Department's General Expense Budget to cover unanticipated expenses. Please see the Town Manager's Report starting on page \_\_ for additional information related to this Article.*

---

**Article 7:      *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 2027 Four Corners Sewer Enterprise Department Budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

***Board of Sewer Commissioners***

**Select Board:**

**Finance Committee:**

**Summary:**      *This article allows the Sewer Department to transfer money from its surplus account to cover any deficit in the Fiscal Year 2027 Four Corners Sewer Budget. Please see the Town Manager's Report starting on page \_\_ for additional information related to this Article.*

---

**Article 8:      *Transfer Within the Stormwater Enterprise Fund***

To see if the Town will vote to transfer a sum or sums of money from the Stormwater Enterprise Fund Surplus to the Fiscal Year 2027 Stormwater Enterprise Budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

***Town Manager***

**Select Board:**

**Finance Committee:**

**Summary:**      *This article allows the Stormwater Department to transfer money from its surplus account to cover any deficit in the Fiscal Year 2027 Stormwater Budget. Please see the Town Manager's Report starting on page \_\_ for additional information related to this Article.*

---

**Article 9:      *Appropriation to Fund Town Forest Expenses***

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate a sum or sums of money from Receipts Reserved for the Town Forest to Town Forest Expenses, or to take any other action relative thereto.

***Town Manager***

**Select Board:**  
**Finance Committee:**

**Summary:**      *The Town Forest Committee is seeking funds to cover the cost of removing a dead stand of Red Pines that are creating a hazard in the Town Forest. The amount needed is estimated to be \$30,000, with \$12,238 coming from a reimbursement from the Division of Conservation and Recreation, based on an estimate from the Committee's consulting Forester.*

---

**Article 10:      *Install Irrigation System/Course Improvements – Groton Country Club***

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 install an irrigation system and make various improvements to the Groton Country Club Golf Course, and all cost associated and related thereto, or to take any other action relative thereto.

***Town Manager***  
***Head Professional/General Manager***

**Select Board:**  
**Finance Committee:**

**Summary:**      *This article requests funding to construct a new irrigation system and complete targeted course improvements at the Groton Country Club. The Club's existing irrigation system provides only limited coverage and requires manual operation, making it difficult to maintain consistent playing conditions, particularly during dry weather. The proposed irrigation system would be fully automated, allowing watering during non-playing hours, and would provide comprehensive coverage of all greens, tee boxes, fairways, and selected in-play rough areas. The project is intended to improve turf health, course conditions, water management, and the overall quality of the golf course. In addition to the irrigation system, the project includes targeted improvements to enhance playability and course infrastructure. These include redesigning portions of Holes 1 through 3 to improve playability and installing a drainage system on Hole 7 to address persistent drainage issues. The preliminary planning estimate for the project is approximately \$1.7 million. Prior to Town Meeting, the Town intends to solicit competitive bids so that a firm project cost can be presented to voters for consideration. If approved, the project would be financed through borrowing. Annual debt service would be appropriated through the Town's Capital Budget and funded from Free Cash, with the expectation that revenues generated by the Groton Country Club will support the debt service over the life of the borrowing. The project is intended to protect the Town's investment in the municipal golf course, enhance the experience for residents and visitors, and support the Club's long-term operational and financial sustainability.*

---

**Article 11: Cow Pond Brook Fields Improvements**

To see if the Town will vote to adopt and approve the recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee for improvements to the Cow Pond Brook Fields as described in Application 2027-11, 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/or borrow pursuant to any applicable statute a sum or sums of money, to be expensed by the Town Manager, for said purposes, and all costs associated and related thereto, or to take any other any other action relative thereto.

**Community Preservation Committee  
Parks Commission**

**Select Board:**

**Finance Committee:**

**Summary:** *This article requests Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding for a revised improvement project at the Cow Pond Brook Fields recreational complex. A similar proposal considered at the 2026 Spring Town Meeting was not approved by the voters. Following Town Meeting, the Parks Commission and Town Manager worked with user groups, Town departments, project consultants, and other stakeholders to substantially revise the project in response to public feedback. The revised proposal reduces the overall project cost by an estimated \$800,000 to \$1 million from the original estimated budget of approximately \$4.8 million, while retaining the project's primary objectives. The revised project includes rehabilitation and modernization of one of the Town's most heavily used recreational facilities; improvements to comply with Natural Heritage requirements by addressing the existing access road; construction of ADA-compliant pathways and amenities to improve accessibility; upgrades to drainage, parking, traffic circulation, and supporting infrastructure; and improvements designed to provide a safe, functional, and sustainable recreational complex for residents, schools, youth organizations, and community groups. Approval of this article will also preserve the Town's eligibility to receive a \$1 million federal grant that has been awarded for the project. If the project does not proceed in time for Fall Town Meeting consideration, the Town will lose access to these federal funds. The grant would significantly reduce the amount of local funding required to complete the project. The Parks Commission believes the revised proposal reflects the concerns raised during the Spring Town Meeting by reducing costs, refining the project scope, and maintaining the long-term goal of preserving and improving an important community recreational asset. If approved, this article would authorize the use of CPA funds to support the project and leverage substantial outside funding for improvements intended to serve Groton residents for many decades.*

---

**Article 12: Establish Means-Tested Senior Citizen Property Tax Exemption**

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to petition the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for the following Special Act, 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:

**AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE TOWN OF GROTON TO ESTABLISH A MEANS-TESTED SENIOR  
CITIZEN PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION**

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. (a) With respect to each qualifying parcel of real property classified as residential in the town of Groton, and as established more specifically by the select board annually pursuant to section 2, there shall be an exemption from the property tax equal to the total amount of tax that would otherwise be assessed without this exemption plus 50 per cent of the annual water and sewer expense less the sum of: (i) 10 per cent of income or other such percentage of income as determined pursuant to section 3; (ii) the circuit breaker income tax credit pursuant to subsection (k) of section 6 of chapter 62 of the General Laws the applicant received for the year prior to the year for which the application is being filed; and (iii) any other statutory exemptions or other forms of property tax relief including the senior tax work off program.

(b) In no event shall this exemption be greater than the cap established on an annual basis by the select board pursuant to section 5. The exemption shall be applied to the domicile of the taxpayer only. For the purposes of this act, "parcel" shall mean a unit of real property as defined by the board of assessors under the deed for the property and shall include a condominium unit. The exemption provided for in this section shall be in addition to any other exemptions allowed pursuant to the General Laws, unless otherwise removed from the calculation in subsection (a).

SECTION 2. The board of assessors of the town of Groton may deny an application for exemption if the board finds that the applicant has excessive assets that place the applicant outside of the intended recipients of the senior exemption established pursuant to this act. For the purposes of this act, what constitutes excessive assets shall be determined by regulations set by the select board. Real property shall qualify for the exemption pursuant to section 1 if all of the following criteria are met:

- (i) the qualifying real property is owned and occupied by a person whose annual household income does not exceed limitations established by the select board pursuant to section 5;
- (ii) the qualifying real property is owned by a single applicant who was 65 years of age or older at the close of the previous year or jointly by persons who are 60 years of age or older; provided, that not less than 1 joint owner was 65 years of age or older at the close of the previous year;
- (iii) the qualifying real property is owned and occupied by the applicant or joint applicants as their domicile;
- (iv) the applicant, or at least 1 of the joint applicants, has been domiciled and owned a home in the town of Groton for not less than 10 consecutive years before filing an application for the exemption;
- (v) the maximum assessed value of the domicile is not greater than the prior year's average assessed value of a town of Groton single family residence;

- (vi) the applicant files for circuit breaker income tax credit pursuant to subsection (k) of chapter 62 of the General Laws, if eligible; and
- (vii) the board of assessors approves the application for the exemption.

SECTION 3. The exemption pursuant to section 1 shall be in addition to any other exemption allowable pursuant to the General Laws, except that there shall be a dollar cap for all real estate exemptions available pursuant to this act as set annually by the select board of the town of Groton pursuant to section 5. If benefits to the applicants are limited because the cap established annually by the select board would otherwise be exceeded, the benefits shall be decreased pro rata.

SECTION 4. A person who seeks to qualify for the exemption pursuant to section 1 shall, before the deadline established by the board of assessors of the town of Groton, file an application, on a form adopted by the board of assessors, with the supporting documentation as described in the application. The application shall be filed each year for which the applicant seeks the exemption.

SECTION 5. The select board may, after consultation with the board of assessors and after holding a public hearing for which notice of not less than 7 days provided, promulgate rules and regulations to implement this act.

SECTION 6. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

or to take any other action relative thereto.

### **Select Board**

#### **Select Board: Finance Committee:**

**Summary:** *This article requests Town Meeting approval to petition the Massachusetts General Court for special legislation authorizing the Town of Groton to establish a local, means-tested property tax exemption for qualifying senior homeowners. If enacted by the Legislature, the program would provide an annual property tax exemption to eligible seniors who meet income, age, residency, ownership, occupancy, and property value requirements. To qualify, applicants generally must meet the income eligibility requirements for the Massachusetts Senior Circuit Breaker Tax Credit; own and occupy the property as their primary residence; be at least 65 years of age (or, in the case of jointly owned property, at least one owner must be 65 and all owners at least 60 years of age); have owned and resided in a home in Groton for at least ten consecutive years; own a home with an assessed value within the annual limits established for the state Circuit Breaker Tax Credit; and, submit an annual application and supporting documentation to the Board of Assessors. The Board of Assessors would administer the program and may deny an application if it determines the applicant possesses excessive assets inconsistent with the program's intended purpose. The Select Board would annually establish the amount of the exemption. The exemption must be between 50% and 200% of the applicant's prior year's Massachusetts Senior Circuit Breaker Tax Credit. The cost of the exemption would be funded through a proportional shift within the residential property tax levy, resulting in a minimal increase in the residential tax burden shared among all other residential taxpayers. The exemption would supplement, rather than replace, any*

*other property tax exemptions for which an applicant may qualify. The special act would become effective only upon approval by the Massachusetts Legislature and the Governor. The authorization would remain in effect for three years, after which Town Meeting would need to vote to reauthorize the program for additional three-year periods.*

---

**Article 13: Small Scale Clean Energy Infrastructure Facility Siting and Permitting**

To see if the Town will vote to amend the General Bylaws of the Town of Groton by inserting a new **Section 185 Small Scale Clean Energy Infrastructure Facility Consolidated Siting and Permitting** to read as follows:

**185-1 Purpose**

The purpose of this bylaw, also referred to as Small Clean Energy Infrastructure Facility (“SCEIF”) Siting and Permitting Bylaw, is to incorporate the standard conditions, criteria, requirements, and procedures for the efficient and appropriate siting and permitting of SCIEFs by the Town of Groton under 225 CMR 29.00.

**185-2 Definitions.**

For the purposes of this bylaw, the terms defined in 225 CMR 29.02 shall have the same meaning in this bylaw.

**185-3 Applicability**

This bylaw applies to the local siting and permitting of a SCEIF when an Applicant requests a Consolidated Local Permit pursuant to 225 CMR 29.00.

**185-4 Compliance with Laws, Ordinances, and Regulations**

The siting and permitting of a SCIEF shall be consistent with all applicable local, state, and federal requirements.

**185-5 Designated Local Government Representatives**

For the purpose of this bylaw, the Land Use Director shall serve as the Local Government Representative.

**185-6 Public Health, Safety, and Environmental Standards**

The public health, safety, and environmental standards, as codified by 225 CMR 29.06, are herein incorporated by reference into the Town of Groton Zoning Bylaws, Chapter 218.

**185-7 Pre-filing Requirements**

The pre-filing requirements, as codified by 225 CMR 29.08, are herein acknowledged.

### **185-8 Consolidated Local Permit Application Fees**

A schedule of all fees for a Consolidated Local Permit Application shall be set by and reviewed from time to time by the Planning Board. If the EFSB Director accepts the Consolidated Local Permit Application for De Novo Adjudication, any permit fees paid under this section shall be refunded in full to the Applicant within 30 days of the Director's acceptance of the Consolidated Local Permit Application, or as soon as practicable.

### **185-9 Consolidated Local Permit Application Review**

The Consolidated Local Permit Application review process, as codified by 225 CMR 29.10, is herein acknowledged. Notwithstanding, the review process shall not exceed 12 months from the date the application is deemed to be complete and no extension shall be granted by the Town of Groton pursuant to 225 CMR 29.10. Failure by the Town of Groton Representative to issue an approval or denial at the expiration of the 12 month review period the application is constructively approved by the operation of law.

### **185-10 Application of the Site Suitability Guidance**

The Town of Groton shall implement and administer the Small Clean Energy Infrastructure Facilities in accordance with Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources Regulations CMR 29.00 or M.G.L. Chapter 25A Sections 2 and 25.

#### ***Planning Board***

**Select Board:**

**Finance Committee:**

**Planning Board:**

**Summary:** *This article proposes the adoption of a new General Bylaw to establish local permitting that complies with the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) regulations found in 225 CMR 29.00. The proposed bylaw is intended to streamline and standardize the local review of qualifying small-scale clean energy infrastructure projects when an applicant seeks a Consolidated Local Permit under state regulations. The bylaw incorporates applicable state definitions, public health, safety, and environmental standards by reference, designates the Town's Land Use Director as the Local Government Representative, and establishes procedures for application fees and permit review.*

---

**Article 14: Small Scale Ground Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Facilities**

To see if the Town will vote to amend Section 218-10.3 Large-Scale Ground Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Facilities as proposed with the tracked edits as follows:

§ 218-10.3 ~~Large~~Small-Scale Ground-Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Facilities.

A. Purpose. The purpose of this section is to ~~promote the creation of new large~~regulate small-scale ground-mounted solar photovoltaic installations by providing standards for the placement, design, construction, operation, monitoring, modification and removal of such installations that address public safety, minimize impacts on scenic, natural and historic resources and to provide adequate financial assurance for the eventual decommissioning of such installations. The provisions set forth in this section shall apply to the construction, operation, and/or repair of ~~large~~small-scale ground-mounted solar photovoltaic installations.

B. Applicability. This section applies to ~~small~~large-scale ground-mounted solar photovoltaic installations proposed to be constructed after the effective date of this section. This section also pertains to physical modifications that materially alter the type, configuration, or size of these installations or related equipment. Small scale solar ground mounted photovoltaic installations subject to this bylaw are only those that exceed a minimum nameplate capacity of 250 kw DC and do not exceed 25 MW. Ground mounted solar photo voltaic installations shall be regulated by the Energy Facilities Siting Board.

1. General requirements for all ~~small~~large-scale solar power generation installations. The following requirements are common to all solar photovoltaic installations to be sited in designated locations.

1.1 Compliance with laws, ordinances and regulations. The construction and operation of all ~~large~~small-scale solar photovoltaic installations shall be consistent with all applicable local, state and federal requirements, including but not limited to all applicable safety, construction, electrical, and communications requirements. All buildings and fixtures forming part of a solar photovoltaic installation shall be constructed in accordance with the State Building Code.

1.2 Building permit and building inspection. No ~~large~~small-scale solar photovoltaic installation shall be constructed, installed or modified as provided in this section without first obtaining appropriate permits.

1.3 Fees. The application for a building permit for a ~~large~~small-scale solar photovoltaic installation must be accompanied by the fee required for a building permit.

1.4 Site plan review. Ground-mounted ~~large~~small-scale solar photovoltaic installations with 250 kW or larger of rated nameplate capacity shall undergo site plan review by the Planning Board prior to ~~construction, installation or issuance of a building permit or~~ modification as provided in this section.

1.4.1 General. All plans and maps shall be prepared, stamped and signed by a professional engineer licensed to practice in Massachusetts.

1.4.2 Required documents. Pursuant to the site plan review process, the project proponent shall provide the following documents:

- (a) A site plan showing:
  - i. Property lines and physical features, including roads, for the project site;
  - ii. Proposed changes to the landscape of the site, grading, vegetation clearing and planting, exterior lighting, screening vegetation or structures;
  - iii. Blueprints or drawings of the solar photovoltaic installation signed by a professional engineer licensed to practice in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts showing the proposed layout of the system and any potential shading from nearby structures
  - iv. One or three line electrical diagram detailing the solar photovoltaic installation, associated components, and electrical interconnection methods, with all National Electrical Code compliant disconnects and overcurrent devices;
  - v. Documentation of the major system components to be used, including the PV panels, mounting system, and inverter;
  - vi. Name, address, and contact information for proposed system installer;
  - vii. Name, address, phone number and signature of the project proponent, as well as all co-proponents or property owners, if any;
  - viii. The name, contact information and signature of any agents representing the project proponent; and
- (b) Documentation of actual or prospective access and control of the project site (see also Subsection 1.5);
- (c) An operation and maintenance plan (see also Subsection 1.6);
- (d) Zoning district designation for the parcel(s) of land comprising the project site [submission of a copy of a zoning map with the parcel(s) identified is suitable for this purpose];
- (e) Proof of liability insurance; and
- (f) Description of financial surety that satisfies Subsection 1.13.3.

The Planning Board may waive documentary requirements as it deems appropriate

1.5 Site control. The project proponent shall submit documentation of actual or prospective access and control of the project site sufficient to allow for construction and operation of the proposed solar photovoltaic installation. Fencing along the site's perimeter shall be provided to control access to a **largesmall**-scale ground-mounted solar photovoltaic facility in order to prevent access to the facility. The fencing shall be compatible with the scenic character of the Town and shall not consist of barbed wire or razor wire.

1.6 Operation and maintenance plan. The project proponent shall submit a plan for the operation and maintenance of the **largesmall**-scale ground-mounted solar photovoltaic installation, which shall include measures for maintaining safe access to the installation, stormwater controls, as well as general procedures for operational maintenance of the installation.

1.7 Utility notification. No **largesmall**-scale ground-mounted solar photovoltaic installation shall be constructed until evidence has been given to the Planning Board that the local electric utility has been informed of the solar photovoltaic installation owner or operator's intent to install an interconnected customer-owned generator. Off-grid systems less than 250 kW shall be exempt from this requirement. The Building Commissioner may issue a permit only if the **largesmall**-scale ground-mounted solar photovoltaic device complies with this section.

1.8 Waivers. If the ~~proposed installation device~~ does not comply with one or more of the following ~~zoning~~ requirements, the applicant shall be required to obtain a special permit from the Planning Board waiving such requirement(s) after finding that such waiver(s) will not derogate from the intent of this chapter or be detrimental or injurious to the public.

1.9 Dimension and density requirements.

1.9.1 Setbacks. For ~~large~~~~small~~-scale ground-mounted solar photovoltaic installations, front, side and rear setbacks shall be as follows:

- (a) Front yard: The front yard depth shall be at least 50 feet.
- (b) Side yard: Each side yard shall have a depth at least 50 feet.
- (c) Rear yard: The rear yard depth shall be at least 50 feet.

1.9.2 Appurtenant structures. All appurtenant structures to ~~large~~~~small~~-scale ground-mounted solar photovoltaic installations shall be subject to reasonable regulations concerning the bulk and height of structures, lot area, setbacks, open space, parking and building coverage requirements. All such appurtenant structures, including, but not limited to, equipment shelters, storage facilities, transformers, and substations, shall be architecturally compatible with each other. Whenever reasonable, structures should be shaded from view by vegetation and/or joined or clustered to avoid adverse visual impacts.

1.10 Design standards.

1.10.1 Lighting. Lighting of solar photovoltaic installations shall be consistent with local, state and federal law. Lighting of other parts of the installation, such as appurtenant structures, shall be limited to that required for safety, security, and operational purposes, and shall be reasonably shielded from abutting properties. Where feasible, lighting of the solar photovoltaic installation shall be directed downward and shall incorporate full cut-off fixtures to reduce light pollution.

1.10.2 Signage. Signs on ~~large~~~~small~~-scale ground-mounted solar photovoltaic installations shall comply with the Town's sign bylaw. A sign consistent with the Town's sign bylaw shall be required to identify the owner and provide a twenty-four-hour emergency contact phone number. Solar photovoltaic installations shall not be used for displaying any advertising except for reasonable identification of the manufacturer or operator of the solar photovoltaic installation.

1.10.3 Utility connections. Reasonable efforts, as determined by the Planning Board, shall be made to place all utility connections from the solar photovoltaic installation underground, depending on appropriate soil conditions, shape, and topography of the site and any requirements of the electric utility. If an existing aboveground connection solution already exists, however, this can be used if it meets the requirements of the electric utility. Electrical transformers for utility interconnections may be ~~aboveground~~~~above ground~~ if required by the electric utility.

1.10.4 Stormwater management. Calculations of storm drainage to demonstrate and assure compliance with the requirements of all applicable federal, state and local regulations and guidelines including, but not limited to, the Department of Environmental Protection Stormwater Management Policy, as it may be amended, must be provided for any ~~large~~~~small~~-scale solar photovoltaic installation.

1.11 Safety and environmental standards.

1.11.1 Emergency services. The ~~large~~small-scale solar photovoltaic installation owner or operator shall provide a copy of the project summary, electrical schematic, and site plan to the local fire chief and electric utility. Upon request, the owner or operator shall cooperate with local emergency services in developing an emergency response plan. All means of shutting down the solar photovoltaic installation shall be clearly marked. The owner or operator shall identify a responsible person for public inquiries throughout the life of the installation.

1.11.2 Land clearing, soil erosion and habitat impacts. Clearing of natural vegetation shall be limited to what is necessary for the construction, operation and maintenance of the ~~large~~small-scale ground-mounted solar photovoltaic installation or otherwise prescribed by applicable laws, regulations, and bylaws. Clearing to minimize shading is acceptable.

#### 1.12 Monitoring and maintenance.

1.12.1 Solar photovoltaic installation conditions. The ~~large~~small-scale ground-mounted solar photovoltaic installation owner or operator shall maintain the facility in good condition. Maintenance shall include, but not be limited to, painting, structural repairs, and integrity of security measures. Site access shall be maintained to a level acceptable to the local Fire Chief and emergency medical services. The owner or operator shall be responsible for the cost of maintaining the solar photovoltaic installation and any access road(s), unless accepted as a public way.

1.12.2 Modifications. All material modifications to a solar photovoltaic installation made after issuance of the required building permit shall require approval by the Planning Board and the electric utility.

#### 1.13 Abandonment or decommissioning.

1.13.1 Removal requirements. Any ~~large~~small-scale ground-mounted solar photovoltaic installation which has reached the end of its useful life or has been abandoned consistent with Subsection 1.13.2 of this section shall be removed. The owner or operator shall physically remove the installation no more than 150 days after the date of discontinued operations. The owner or operator shall notify the Planning Board by certified mail of the proposed date of discontinued operations and plans for removal. Decommissioning shall consist of:

- (a) Physical removal of all ~~large~~small-scale ground-mounted solar photovoltaic installations, structures, equipment, security barriers and transmission lines from the site.
- (b) Disposal of all solid and hazardous waste in accordance with local, state, and federal waste disposal regulations.
- (c) Stabilization or revegetation of the site as necessary to minimize erosion. The Planning Board may allow the owner or operator to leave landscaping or designated below-grade foundations in order to minimize erosion and disruption to vegetation.

1.13.2 Abandonment. Absent notice of a proposed date of decommissioning or written notice of extenuating circumstances, the solar photovoltaic installation shall be considered abandoned when it fails to operate for more than one year without the written consent of the Planning Board. If the owner or operator of the ~~large~~small-scale ground-mounted solar photovoltaic installation fails to remove the installation in accordance with the requirements of this section within 150 days of

abandonment or the proposed date of decommissioning, the Town may enter the property and physically remove the installation.

1.13.3 Financial surety. Proponents of ~~large~~small-scale ground-mounted solar photovoltaic projects shall provide a form of surety, either through escrow account, bond or otherwise in a form acceptable to Town Counsel, to cover the cost of removal in the event the Town must remove the installation and remediate the landscape, in an amount and form determined to be reasonable by the Planning Board, but in no event to exceed more than 125% of the cost of removal and compliance with the additional requirements set forth herein, as determined by the project proponent. Such surety will not be required for municipally or state-owned facilities. The project proponent shall submit a fully inclusive estimate of the costs associated with removal, prepared by a qualified engineer. The amount shall include a mechanism for calculating increased removal costs due to inflation.

### ***Planning Board***

**Select Board:**

**Finance Committee:**

**Planning Board:**

**Summary:** *This Article proposes amendments to Section 218-10.3 of the Zoning Bylaw governing ground-mounted solar photovoltaic facilities to ensure consistency with recent changes in Massachusetts law regulating small-scale clean energy infrastructure. The proposed amendments revise the bylaw to apply to ground-mounted solar photovoltaic facilities with a nameplate capacity greater than 250 kW DC and up to 25 MW, which are now subject to review under the Commonwealth's Energy Facilities Siting Board (EFSB) regulations. Approval of this article will update the Town's existing solar bylaw to reflect current Massachusetts law while maintaining local oversight of project design, construction, operation, and eventual site restoration.*

---

### **Article 15: Citizens' Petition – Senior Property Tax Freeze Program**

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to petition the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for the following Special Act, 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:

### **AN ACT ESTABLISHING A SENIOR PROPERTY TAX FREEZE PROGRAM IN THE TOWN OF GROTON**

Section 1. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the Town of Groton is authorized to establish a Senior Property Tax Freeze Program for qualifying homeowners.

Section 2. A qualifying homeowner shall:

- Be seventy (70) years of age or older.
- Have owned and occupied the property as his or her principal residence.
- Have resided in the Town of Groton for at least thirty-five (35) consecutive years immediately preceding the application.
- Meet any additional eligibility requirements that the Town may establish by bylaw, including income or asset limits if deemed appropriate.

Section 3. The real estate taxes assessed on the qualifying homeowner's principal residence shall be frozen at the amount due for the fiscal year in which the homeowner first becomes eligible. The homeowner shall remain responsible for paying the frozen amount each year, but no future increases in the tax assessment shall apply while the homeowner remains eligible.

Section 4. Eligibility shall continue only while the property remains the homeowner's principal residence and all eligibility requirements continue to be met.

Section 5. The Town may adopt bylaws and regulations necessary to administer the program.

Section 6. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

### ***Citizens' Petition***

| <b><u>NAME</u></b> | <b><u>ADDRESS</u></b> | <b><u>NAME</u></b>   | <b><u>ADDRESS</u></b> |
|--------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Samuel A. Palmer   | 12 Skinners Lane      | Shelley Ann Bickford | 127 Lost Lake Drive   |
| Marilyn Palmer     | 12 Skinners Lane      | Lois H. Young        | 28 Champney Street    |
| W. David Nelson    | 282 Farmers Row       | Brett E. Stevens     | 186 Lost Lake Drive   |
| Violetta O'Donnell | 555 Boston Road       | Steven Sinatra       | 32 Indian Road        |
| Cynthia Thompson   | 7 Castle Drive        | Ryan Stevens         | 21 A Hazel Road       |

**Select Board:**  
**Finance Committee:**

**Summary:** The following summary was prepared by the petitioners and represents their view on the Article: *This article requests that Town Meeting authorize the Select Board to petition the Massachusetts General Court for special legislation to establish a Senior Property Tax Freeze Program for the Town of Groton. If enacted, the proposed legislation would permit Groton to freeze the annual real estate tax on the principal residence of eligible senior homeowners. To qualify, a homeowner would be required to be at least 70 years of age, have owned and occupied the property as a principal residence, have resided in the Town of Groton for at least 35 consecutive years immediately preceding application, and satisfy any additional eligibility requirements established by the Town, including any income or asset limitations that may be adopted. Under the proposed program, eligible homeowners would continue to pay their annual property taxes, but the amount would remain at the level in effect when they first qualified for the program. The tax would not be eliminated, and the freeze would remain in effect only while the homeowner continues to meet all eligibility requirements and occupies the property as a principal residence.*

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 14<sup>th</sup> Day of September in the year of our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Six.

*Peter S. Cunningham*

Peter S. Cunningham, Chair

*Rebecca H. Pine*

Rebecca H. Pine, Vice Chair

*Nicholas J. Degaitas, Jr.*

Nicholas J. Degaitas, Jr., 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



## TOWN OF GROTON

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

## Select Board

Peter S. Cunningham, *Chair*  
Rebecca H. Pine, *Vice Chair*  
Nicholas J. Degaitas, Jr., *Clerk*  
John F. Reilly, *Member*  
Matthew F. Pisani, *Member*

**Town Manager**  
Mark W. Haddad

August 17, 2026

Community Preservation Committee  
Town of Groton  
173 Main Street  
Groton, MA 01450

Re: Community Preservation Funding Recommendation – Cow Pond Brook Fields Improvement Project

Dear Members of the Community Preservation Committee:

The Groton Select Board is pleased to express its strong support for the revised Cow Pond Brook Fields Improvement Project and respectfully urges the Community Preservation Committee to recommend Community Preservation Act funding for this important investment at the 2026 Fall Town Meeting. The Select Board recognizes and appreciates the Community Preservation Committee's willingness to approve the project's out-of-cycle application, allowing this revised proposal to move through the Community Preservation Act review process. We believe the project now before the Committee is substantially improved from the proposal considered at the 2026 Spring Town Meeting and reflects a genuine effort by the Parks Commission, Town Manager, user groups, Town staff, and project consultants to listen to residents and respond meaningfully to the concerns expressed by the community.

The revised project maintains the long-term vision of creating an improved recreational facility while reducing the overall project cost by an estimated \$800,000 to \$1 million from the original \$4.8 million proposal. These savings have been achieved without compromising the project's most critical objectives, demonstrating a commitment to fiscal responsibility and thoughtful stewardship of public resources.

The project will:

- Rehabilitate and modernize one of Groton's most heavily used recreational facilities.
- Address long-standing access road issues necessary to comply with Natural Heritage and Conservation Commission requirements.
- Improve accessibility through ADA-compliant pathways and amenities, ensuring residents of all ages and abilities can enjoy the facility.
- Enhance drainage, parking, traffic circulation, and supporting infrastructure to improve safety and year-round usability.
- Create a recreational complex that will serve Groton families, schools, youth organizations, and residents for generations to come.

**Community Preservation Committee**  
**Letter of Support – Cow Pond Brook Fields Project**  
**August 17, 2026**  
**page two**

Beyond these important local benefits, the project presents a remarkable financial opportunity for the Town. Approval of this project will preserve \$1 million in federal grant funding that has been awarded specifically for these improvements. Every federal dollar invested in this project is a dollar that does not have to be borne by Groton taxpayers. Opportunities to leverage this level of outside funding for a community recreational project are rare, and we believe the Town should make every effort to capitalize on this investment.

The Cow Pond Brook Fields have become one of Groton's most important recreational assets. Thousands of residents, youth athletes, families, and visitors use these facilities each year. Investing in this project is not simply about improving athletic fields, it is also about preserving public open space, expanding recreational opportunities, improving accessibility, enhancing public safety, and ensuring that this valuable community resource continues to meet the needs of current and future generations.

The Community Preservation Act was established to preserve and enhance the community assets that define Groton's quality of life. This project embodies those objectives by protecting and improving a public recreational resource that has served the Town for decades and will continue to do so for many years to come.

For these reasons, the Groton Select Board respectfully requests that the Community Preservation Committee recommend Community Preservation Act funding for the revised Cow Pond Brook Fields Improvement Project at the 2026 Fall Town Meeting. We believe this proposal represents a thoughtful, fiscally responsible investment in Groton's future—one that responds to community feedback, leverages significant outside funding, and will provide lasting benefits for generations of residents.

Thank you for your continued dedication to preserving and enhancing the resources that make Groton such an exceptional community.

Sincerely,

GROTON SELECT BOARD

Peter S. Cunningham, Chair

PSC/mwh

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
VIRTUAL MEETING  
MONDAY, JULY 16, 2026  
UN-APPROVED**

**Select Board Members Virtually Present:** Peter Cunningham, Chair; Becky Pine, Vice Chair; Nick Degaitas Jr., Clerk; Matt Pisani; John Reilly;

**Also Virtually Present:** Mark Haddad, Town Manager; Kara Cruikshank, Executive Assistant to the Town Manager; Katie Kazanjian, Treasurer/Tax Collector; and Tammi Mickel, Principal Assessor.

Ms. Pine, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM and reviewed the agenda.

**9:00 a.m. Review Open Meeting Law Complaint filed by Patrick Higgins on July 9, 2026, concerning the Board's meeting on June 15 and Review Open Meeting Law Complaint filed by Patrick Higgins on July 9, 2026, concerning the Board's meeting on June 29, 2026.**

Ms. Pine explained that the Board received two Open Meeting Law complaints from Patrick Higgins on July 9, 2026, regarding the Board's June 15 and June 29 meetings. All members of the Board received copies of these complaints (See included with these minutes). The complaints allege that the Board violated the Open Meeting Law because the notices for those meetings did not include the names of individuals being considered for appointments to various positions and committees.

Town Counsel has advised that the Open Meeting Law requires meeting notices to include the names of candidates under consideration for appointment, if known at the time the notice is posted. Although the candidates' names were included in the Town Manager's Reports for both meetings and in documents that were part of the Board's meeting packets and posted on the Town website before the meetings, the names must also appear on the meeting notices. Town Counsel has prepared draft response letters, and the Board received copies of those drafts. Ms. Pine stated that if there were no objections, Chair Cunningham would work with Town Counsel to finalize the response letters and submit them to the complainant and the Attorney General's Office. The draft responses explained that the Board acknowledged the Open Meeting Law Violation, ensured that names will be properly posted on meeting agendas, and stated that it believes this addresses the complaint. The letters will be filed with the Attorney General and sent to the complainant, Mr. Higgins. There were no questions or concerns from the Board.

*Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the draft response letters and to send them to the complainant and the Attorney General's Office. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. Roll Call: Cunningham-aye; Pisani-aye; Reilly-aye; Degaitas-aye; Pine-aye.*

Mr. Haddad said he would have the Chair sign the proposed letter and submit it to both the complainant and the Attorney General.

The Select Board adjourned at 9:04 a.m.

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

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
MONDAY, JULY 27, 2026  
UN-APPROVED**

**Select Board Members Present:** Peter Cunningham, Chair; Becky Pine, Vice Chair; Nick Degaitas Jr., Clerk; John Reilly; Matt Pisani;

**Also Present:** Mark Haddad, Town Manager; Kara Cruikshank, Executive Assistant to the Town Manager; Patrica DuFresne, Assistant Director of Finance/Town Accountant; Melisa Doig, Human Resources Director; Grace Bannasch, Town Clerk; and Bud Robertson, Finance Committee Chair.

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

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD - Zoom**

None

**TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

**1. Fiscal Year 2028 Budget Update.**

Mr. Haddad said that the Budget Working Group continues to review the Budget and meet with other Towns' officials to develop Fiscal Year 2028 budget strategies. He said he and Mr. Degaitas had a productive meeting with representatives from the Town of Grafton, who shared insights about their successful override campaign. Mr. Haddad said they will continue to reach out to other communities that achieved similar success. He shared positive news about additional State funding, including allocations for the Town of Groton and the Groton-Dunstable Regional School District for Fiscal Years 2026 and 2027. The Commonwealth has provided \$275,894 in funding through the Winter Recovery Assistance Program (WRAP) to address a previous snow and ice deficit, a significant budget issue for Fiscal Years 2026 and 2027. This funding will help the Town cover the \$360,000 snow and ice deficit for FY 2026. Mr. Haddad announced that the Governor has proposed an additional appropriation of \$100 million in flexible education funding for school districts. If approved, it will provide \$112 per student for the Groton-Dunstable Regional School District, resulting in an extra \$253,000 in Chapter 70 Aid for the Groton Dunstable Regional School District. This funding would prevent the District from using their E&D. Mr. Haddad said it is important that the School District receives this, and Senator Cronin and Margaret Scarsdale are strong advocates for this funding. Mr. Degaitas brought forward a proposal to hire an economic development director to boost business and revenues in Groton. Mr. Haddad explained that there has been a lot of conversation on this topic in the past. He suggested that they consider bringing the proposal to the Fall Town Meeting, where they could appropriate funds from Free Cash. He recommended making it a part-time position with a budget of \$10,000 to \$15,000 funded from Free Cash. Mr. Haddad said that he would see what the certification of the Free Cash amount is and provide a final recommendation to the Board for Town Meeting consideration.

**2. Update on the Water Expansion Project.**

The next phase of the Water Expansion Project is well underway on Raddin Road, Hawtree Way, and Kemp Street. Mr. Haddad and Dunstable Town Administrator Jason Silva asked the Engineers at APEX to provide an update on the project along with the improved Project Website. A Community Public Forum will be held on August 6th at 6:00 p.m. at Town Hall and via Zoom to provide a project update. To assist with the update the LSP from Tighe and Bond will attend the Forum. In addition, Water Superintendent Dan Stoneking went door-to-door in the construction area with an information letter.

**3. Report from the Town Manager on the FY 2026 Country Club Budget.**

Mr. Haddad said that it was with great pleasure that he provides the Select Board with a summary of the FY 2026 Country Club Budget. The Club has set another revenue record this year. In FY 2026, the Club had revenues totaling \$1,083,236, which is \$75,922 more than in FY 2025. The Club has spent \$981,412 on salaries, wages, general expenses, and capital expenditures, with another \$69,981 in overhead, for a total of \$1,051,393. The Club made a profit of \$31,843 in FY 2026, which was returned to the General Fund and will be certified as Free Cash. Over the last two fiscal years, the Club has returned \$103,076 to the General Fund. He said this continues to be amazing news and that he could not be happier. Mr. Haddad took a moment to thank Head Professional/General Manager Shawn Campbell for his continued outstanding efforts in managing the Club. He continues to do an amazing job for the Town of Groton. Mr. Cunningham inquired about the proposed irrigation system that will be presented to the 2026 Fall Town Meeting. Mr. Degaitas said it may be beneficial for the public to see labor and time savings projections in the PowerPoint presentation for the Fall Town meeting.

**4. Update on Select Board Schedule through Labor Day.**

|                             |                                                     |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Monday, August 3, 2026-     | No Meeting (Kara Vacation)                          |
| Monday, August 10, 2026-    | No Meeting (Mark's Vacation)                        |
| Monday, August 17, 2026-    | Review First Draft of the Fall Town Meeting Warrant |
| Monday, August 24, 2026-    | No Meeting                                          |
| Monday, August 31, 2026-    | Public Hearing on the Fall Town Meeting Warrant     |
| Monday, September 7, 2026-  | No Meeting (Labor Day)                              |
| Monday, September 14, 2026- | Issue the Warrant for the Fall Town Meeting         |

**ITEMS FOR SELECT BOARD CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL**

**1. Consider Appointing Charlotte Weigel to the Affordable Housing Trust.**

*Mr. Reilly moved to appoint Charlotte Weigel to the Affordable Housing Trust, with a term expiring on June 30, 2028. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

**2. Consider Authorizing the Town Manager to Sign the CPA Affordable Housing Trust.**

The Affordable Housing Trust approved the CPA Affordable Housing Grant Agreement and authorized its Chair, Becky Pine, to sign on the Trust's behalf. Mr. Haddad explained that it is similar to the grant agreement executed over the last two years for CPA Funding approved for the Trust. The Trust has requested that the Select Board authorize the Town Manager to sign the Agreement on behalf of the Board. (See the included grant agreement)

Mr. Pisani moved to authorize the Town Manager to sign the CPA Affordable Housing Grant Agreement on the Board's behalf. Mr. Degaitas seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**3. Establish the Stormwater Fee for FY2027.**

Mr. Haddad explained that the 2026 Spring Town Meeting approved the following budget for the Stormwater Utility for Fiscal Year 2027:

| LINE                      | DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION        | FY 2026<br>APPROPRIATED | FY 2027<br>TOWN MANAGER<br>BUDGET | PERCENT<br>CHANGE |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>STORMWATER UTILITY</b> |                               |                         |                                   |                   |
|                           | Stormwater Wages/Benefits     | \$ 86,890               | \$ 119,565                        | 37.60%            |
|                           | Stormwater Expenses           | \$ 112,000              | \$ 112,000                        | 0.00%             |
|                           | Stormwater Capital Outlay     | \$ 51,000               | \$ 51,000                         | 0.00%             |
| <hr/>                     |                               |                         |                                   |                   |
|                           | <b>500 DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL</b> | <b>\$ 249,890</b>       | <b>\$ 282,565</b>                 | <b>13.08%</b>     |

Mr. Haddad explained that during the development of the Budget and in an effort to provide as much funding as possible for the Groton-Dunstable Regional School District, an additional 16 hours of administrative support was transferred from the Operating Budget to the Stormwater Budget. This change accounted for the 13.08% increase. Although the fee has been kept at \$60 for the past four years, Mr. Haddad said they could no longer do so this year. Based on a parcel count of 4,086, Mr. Haddad recommended that the Select Board vote to set the Stormwater Fee at \$69, representing a 15% increase, for Fiscal Year 2027.

Ms. Pine made a motion to approve a \$69 Stormwater Fee for Fiscal Year 2027. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**4. Finalize and Approve the Town Manager's Annual Performance Evaluation.**

The Annual Performance Evaluation of the Town Manager has been completed. The next step is for the Chair of the Select Board to present the final evaluation to the full Board during a public meeting for their approval. Chair Cunningham explained that four members of the Board participated in the Town Manager's Annual Performance Evaluation and found Mr. Haddad's performance to be exemplary. Last year presented many budget challenges, and Mr. Haddad consistently rose to those challenges. He works hard to instill a positive culture within Town Hall and among the Town employees. This demonstrates his strong management skills. Mr. Reilly clarified that the Board submits the Town Manager's evaluation individually to Melisa Doig, the Human Resources Director. He said the grading numbers are consistent among the four Board members. The Board congratulated Mr. Haddad on a great year. Mr. Haddad stated that he is only as good as the department heads that he works with, and thanked the Board. Mr. Cunningham thanked the Town Manager and looks forward to another great year.

*Ms. Pine made a motion to accept the Town Manager's Annual Performance Evaluation with pleasure. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. The motion carried 4 in Favor, 1 abstained- Degaitas.*

**5. Consider Approving a Common Victualler's License for Groton Cuisine, LLC d/b/a Puritan Tavern.**

*Mr. Pisani made a motion to approve the common victualler's license for Groton Cuisine, LLC d/b/s Puritan Tavern, as presented. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

**6. Discussion- Determine Process for Evaluating Representative Town Meeting.**

Mr. Degaitas requested an Agenda item for the Board to discuss a process to evaluate whether the Town of Groton should move toward a Representative Town Meeting. To assist the Board with the discussion, Mr. Haddad and Mr. Degaitas drafted a proposed Charge for an Ad Hoc Town Meeting Governance Study Committee (see attached). Mr. Haddad explained that it is a two- to three-year process to implement this. He explained the process to the Board. The main purpose of this Committee would be to study the issue and determine whether or not the Select Board should bring forward an Article to a future Town Meeting to create an Elected Charter Commission that would consider changing Groton's Legislative Body from an Open Town Meeting to a representative Town Meeting.

Mr. Degaitas clarified that he wanted to explore this option. The average town has a 4% turnout for Town Meeting. He wanted to look at ways to drive attendance at Town Meeting. He thought it was an option for members of the public to voice their opinions. Mr. Cunningham wasn't opposed to forming a committee. Ms. Pine wanted to see the law. Ms. Grace Bannasch, Town Clerk, was in attendance and explained the process. Mr. Robertson commented that this doesn't need to be studied at this point and that Representative Town Meeting is one step removed from democracy. He doesn't believe the town will react positively to this proposal. Mr. Haddad explained that he has received multiple negative calls regarding this proposal. Mr. Pisani believes that there are many issues in Town that need to be focused on rather than this at this time. Mr. Reilly doesn't believe they need a Representative Town Meeting at this time. Ms. Bannasch stated that if too many people show up to a Town Meeting and it can't accommodate everyone, then they should explore this option. Mr. Cunningham suggested that the Board get the word out to members of the public and then bring this proposal back for discussion at a future meeting.

**7. Review and Consider Approving FY2027 Select Board Goals.**

Mr. Haddad and Ms. Pine have finalized their review of Proposed Goals presented to the Select Board for Fiscal Year 2027. The Board was provided a copy for their consideration and approval (see attached).

*Mr. Reilly made a motion to accept the FY 2027 Select Board Goals. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

**8. Consider Approving a One-Day Wine and Malt Beverage License for the Friends of Prescott Wines of Summer Event to be held on Thursday, July 30, 2026, from 7:00 pm. to 9:00 p.m.**

*Ms. Pine made a motion to approve a One-Day Wine and Malt Beverage License for the Friends of Prescott Wines of Summer Event to be held on Thursday, July 30, 2026, from 7:00 pm. to 9:00 p.m.*

*Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

**9. Consider Approving a One-Day Wine and Malt Beverage License for the Friends of Prescott Tequila Night to be held on Friday, August 14, 2026, from 7:00 pm. to 8:30 p.m.**

*Ms. Pine made a motion to approve a One Day Wine and Malt Beverage License for the Friends of Prescott Tequila Night to be held on Friday, August 14, 2026, from 7:00 pm. to 8:30 p.m. Mr. Pisani*

*seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

**OTHER BUSINESS**

**Authorize the Town Manager and One Member of the Select Board to Sign Warrants for the Next Thirty 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.*

**On-Going Issues**

- A. PFAS Issue – None
- B. UMass Satellite Emergency Facility – None
- B. Fire Department Staffing – None
- C. Main Street Study – None
- D. Flock Cameras-None

**SELECT BOARD LIASON REPORTS**

None

**Approval of the Regularly Scheduled Meeting of July 13, 2026**

*Ms. Pine made a motion to approve the regularly scheduled minutes of July 13, 2026. Mr. Degaitas seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

Mr. Haddad announced that he will be temporarily absent as the Town Manager during the week of August 10th and appointed Ms. Melisa Doig as Acting Town Manager.

The Select Board adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

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