



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

SELECT BOARD MEETING
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 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) – 830 3871 2455 Passcode - 699628**

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

- 1. Consider Ratifying the Town Manager's Appointment of Mark Francis as a Police Officer for the Groton Police Department**
- 2. Fiscal Year 2027 First Quarter Financial Review**
- 3. Update on 2027 Select Board Goals**
- 4. Fiscal Year 2028 Update**
- 5. Update on Select Board Meeting Schedule through the End of the Year**

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

- 1. Approval of the Monarch Path Deed by the Select Board pursuant to M.G.L. c. 40, §8C.**
- 2. Consider Appointing Dan DiGiacomo, Phil Francisco, Andrea Mischel, and Stephanie Georgopoulos to the Groton Cultural Council.**
- 3. Consider Approving a One-Day All Alcoholic Beverages License for the Friends of Prescott Mixology: Retro Cocktails with a Modern Twist on Friday, November 20, 2026, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.**
- 4. Consider Approving a One-Day All Alcoholic Beverages License for applicant Galina Frishman: A Surprise Birthday Party on Friday, November 21, 2026, from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. to be held at the Prescott Community Center.**

OTHER BUSINESS -

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: Regularly Scheduled Meeting of October 26, 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: *November 2, 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. Ian Pereira recently resigned from his position as a Police Officer with the Groton Police Department to accept a similar position with the Town of Lunenburg. Given that the Department is already operating with one fewer officer following the elimination of a position in last year's budget, filling this vacancy as quickly as possible is a top priority. Recruiting and hiring a new officer who would be required to attend the 22-week Police Academy would place additional financial and operational burdens on the Department. Fortunately, we have an opportunity to hire an experienced officer from another department who would be available to begin serving Groton following an appropriate notice period with his current employer. Mark Francis, currently a Police Officer with the Town of Townsend, has expressed an interest in transferring to the Groton Police Department. His resume is attached to this Report for the Board's review. I recently had the opportunity to interview Mr. Francis and was impressed with his qualifications and experience. I am confident that he would be an excellent addition to our Police Department. To that end, I have appointed Mark Francis to the position of Police Officer with the Groton Police Department. Pursuant to the Groton Charter, I respectfully request that the Board ratify this appointment at Monday's meeting.
2. Enclosed with this Report is the Fiscal Year 2027 First Quarter Financial Report for the Board's Review. I would like take some time at Monday's meeting reviewing this with the Board. Assistant Director Finance/Town Accountant Patricia DuFresne will attend Monday's meeting as well for this discussion.

Select Board
Weekly Agenda Update/Report
November 2, 2026
page two

3. As is our practice when reviewing the Financial Report, the Board reviews the status of the current year's Goals and Objectives. Enclosed with this Report is a copy of the goals with the most recent update. I would like to take a few moments at Monday's meeting reviewing the status with the Board.
4. We will be kicking off the FY 2028 Budget Process with the Department Heads on Wednesday, November 4th. Based on guidance approved by the Select Board and Finance Committee at last week's meeting, I have drafted the Budget Instructions. They are enclosed with this Report for your review. We can discuss this in more detail at Monday's meeting.
5. Please see the update to the Meeting Schedule that will take the Board through the end of the year:

Monday, November 9, 2026 -	No Meeting
Monday, November 16, 2026 -	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Thursday, November 19, 2026 -	Public Hearing on Main Street Study (at PAC)
Monday, November 23, 2026 -	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, November 30, 2026 -	No Meeting
Monday, December 7, 2026 -	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, December 14, 2026 -	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, December 21, 2026 -	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, December 28, 2026 -	No Meeting (Christmas Holiday)
Monday, January 4, 2027 -	No Meeting (New Years' Holiday)
Monday, January 11, 2027 -	Regularly Scheduled Meeting

ITEMS FOR SELECT BOARD CONSIDERATION AND ACTION

1. As part of the acceptance of Monarch Path by the Town, some land was deeded to the Conservation Commission. Enclosed with this Report is a copy of the Deed that requires the approval of the Select Board. I would respectfully request that the Board approve the Deed and authorize the Chair to sign said Deed on behalf of the Board.

Select Board
Weekly Agenda Update/Report
November 2, 2026
page three

2. The Local Cultural Council has requested that the Board appoint the following individuals to the Council (with said term expirations):

Stephanie Georgopoulos	June 30, 2032
Phil Francisco	June 30, 2032
Anrea Mischel	June 30, 2031
Daniel DeGiacomo	June 30, 2031

I would respectfully request that the Board make these appointments.

3. I would respectfully request that the Board consider approving a One-Day All Alcoholic Beverages License for the Friends of Prescott Mixology: Retro Cocktails with a Modern Twist on Friday, November 20, 2026, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
4. I would respectfully request that the Board consider approving a One-Day All Alcoholic Beverages License for applicant Galina Frishman: A Surprise Birthday Party on Friday, November 21, 2026, from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. to be held at the Prescott Community Center.

MWH/rjb
enclosures

Mark Francis

Professional experience

- | | | |
|---|---|--------------------------|
| 2006-Present | Townsend Police Department | Townsend, Ma |
| Police Officer | | |
| ▪ School Resource Officer – 6 years | | |
| ▪ Field Training Officer | | |
| ▪ Firearm Instructor | | |
| ▪ Community Policing through patrols and community programs | | |
| ▪ Maintain state qualifications as required by POST | | |
| ▪ Shift OIC duties | | |
| ▪ Evidence and Property Officer | | |
| ▪ Keeper of Records and Alternate for breathalyzer | | |
| ▪ Reserve Officer 1999 to 2006 | | |
|
2001-2006 |
Massachusetts General Hospital |
Boston, Ma |
| Police and Security Officer/Assistant Supervisor (L2) | | |
| ▪ Licensed Special State Police Officer | | |
| ▪ Protection of the public, customers, employees and property | | |
| ▪ Supervise a shift of ten to eighteen officers | | |
| ▪ Completed International Association of Healthcare Security and Safety Supervisor Training | | |
| ▪ Attended Dale Carnegie Course (2005) | | |
| ▪ Patrol and respond to calls for assistance -- main campus and area health centers | | |
| ▪ Dispatch functions | | |
|
1998-2000 |
Kmart Corporation |
Billerica, Ma |
| Area Loss Prevention Manager | | |
| ▪ Provide loss prevention services for multiple locations (Acton, Tewksbury, Billerica) | | |
| ▪ Identify and control waste due to shoplifting, internal theft and paper errors | | |
| ▪ Conduct weekly and monthly safety talks and inspections | | |
| ▪ Complete and follow-up with investigations and restitutions | | |
|
1996-1998 |
Pheasant Lane Mall |
Nashua, NH |
| Senior Lead Officer | | |
| ▪ Interim Director of Security for fifteen weeks | | |
| ▪ Budget proposals, Hiring, Discipline procedures | | |
| ▪ Supervise day-to-day operations of a fourteen officer department | | |
| ▪ Maintain safe environment for customers and employees | | |
| ▪ Maintain records of Security Incidents and operations | | |
|
1992-1999 |
Pepperell Police Department |
Pepperell, Ma |
| Auxiliary Police Sergeant | | |
| ▪ Assist full-time officers in the performance of their duties | | |
| ▪ Supervise a platoon of seven officers | | |
| ▪ Reserve/Intermittent Police Academy (1993) | | |

Education

- | | | |
|-------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| 2005-2006 | Curry College | Worcester, Ma |
| Criminal Justice | Bachelor of Science Degree | |
|
1992-1995 |
Mount Wachusett Community College |
Gardner, Ma |
| Criminal Justice | Associates of Science Degree | |
|
1988-1992 |
North Middlesex Regional High School |
Townsend, Ma |
| Diploma | National Honor Society Member | |

Town of Groton
General Fund Statement of Revenues & Expenditures
September 30, 2026

	Current Budget FY27	July - Sep Actual FY27	Variance to FY27 Budget	1st Qtr % of Budget	Final FY26 Budget	July thru June Actual FY26	July - Sep Actual FY26	1st Qtr Variance to FY26 Budget	1st Qtr % of Budget	% of Budget Change
Revenue										
State Aid (Lottery/Exempts/Van)	1,229,879	306,899	(922,980)	24.95%	1,182,722	1,148,750	290,033	(892,689)	24.52%	101.75%
Motor Vehicle/Boat Excise	1,985,902	159,479	(1,826,423)	8.03%	1,886,000	2,234,231	190,833	(1,695,167)	10.12%	79.35%
Local Option Meals Tax	275,000	75,824	(199,176)	27.57%	275,000	281,612	71,966	(203,034)	26.17%	105.35%
Local Option Room Occupancy Tax	200,000	67,596	(132,404)	33.80%	185,000	220,601	61,778	(123,222)	33.39%	101.23%
Marijuana Revenue	20,000	7,942	(12,058)	39.71%	15,000	40,305	10,134	(4,866)	67.56%	58.78%
Penalties and Interest on Taxes	110,000	41,451	(68,549)	37.68%	110,000	164,911	25,193	(84,807)	22.90%	164.54%
Payments in Lieu of Taxes	360,000	4,510	(355,490)	1.25%	355,443	410,455	258,179	(97,264)	72.64%	1.72%
Groton Hill Music Ticket Fee	90,000	30,028	(59,972)	33.36%	59,713	116,194	25,828	(33,885)	43.25%	77.13%
Other Charges for Service (Dunst)	15,300	250	(15,050)	1.63%	15,300	15,700	200	(15,100)	1.31%	124.43%
Country Club Revenue	900,000	185,037	(714,963)	20.56%	875,000	1,083,236	211,010	(663,990)	24.12%	85.24%
Fees (incl Van rides)	420,000	132,490	(287,510)	31.55%	400,000	457,894	136,151	(263,849)	34.04%	92.69%
Rentals (Cell Towers)	63,000	23,325	(39,675)	37.02%	58,000	78,175	22,748	(35,252)	39.22%	94.39%
Other Departmental Revenue	600,000	7,465	(592,535)	1.24%	582,372	588,838	11,993	(570,379)	2.06%	60.19%
Licenses and Permits	500,000	141,536	(358,464)	28.31%	450,000	843,988	177,136	(272,864)	39.36%	71.93%
Fines and Forfeits	10,000	2,520	(7,480)	25.20%	10,000	9,944	2,600	(7,400)	26.00%	96.92%
Investment Income	240,000	97,816	(142,184)	40.76%	258,499	290,674	65,062	(193,437)	25.17%	161.94%
Misc Recurring (LRTA Van Reimb)	230,988	14,872	(216,116)	6.44%	94,000	88,379	533	(93,467)	0.57%	1129.82%
Misc (WC Reimb & Other)	0	5,283	5,283	#DIV/0!	0	5,927	3,842	3,842	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Enterprise Allocation for Indirects	269,279	59,025	(210,254)	21.92%	214,002	213,736	54,255	(159,747)	25.35%	86.47%
Real Estate and Personal Prop	47,076,184	11,632,438	(35,443,746)	24.71%	44,683,019	44,517,869	10,851,299	(33,831,720)	24.29%	101.73%
Total Revenue	54,595,532	12,995,786	(41,599,746)	23.80%	51,709,070	52,811,419	12,470,773	(39,238,297)	24.12%	98.67%
Expenditures (Operating Expenses)										
General Government	3,297,716	1,075,203	2,222,513	32.60%	3,237,061	3,050,802	1,061,497	2,175,564	32.79%	99.42%
Public Safety General Fund	5,060,927	1,310,597	3,750,330	25.90%	4,848,176	4,750,958	1,203,844	3,644,332	24.83%	104.31%
Department of Public Works	2,247,020	417,023	1,829,997	18.56%	2,719,884	2,679,282	509,561	2,210,323	18.73%	99.09%
Culture, Rec, & Citizen's Svcs	2,489,751	795,333	1,694,418	31.94%	2,592,160	2,536,461	796,011	1,796,149	30.71%	104.01%
Employee Benefits	4,848,431	3,306,172	1,542,259	68.19%	4,523,845	4,500,572	3,106,994	1,416,851	68.68%	99.29%
Total Operating Expenses	17,943,845	6,904,328	11,039,517	38.48%	17,921,126	17,518,075	6,677,907	11,243,219	37.26%	103.27%
Expenditures (Non - Operating Exp.)										
Special Articles Voted for Current Yr	720,681	195,457	525,224	27.12%	869,885	558,764	134,733	735,152	15.49%	175.08%
PY Articles/Enc(See Use of Enc Below)	702,752	49,478	653,274	7.04%	1,197,005	814,443	534,112	662,893	44.62%	15.78%
Education	30,941,068	7,735,267	23,205,801	25.00%	29,545,154	29,545,154	7,386,289	22,158,865	25.00%	100.00%
Debt Service	6,514,667	463,854	6,050,813	7.12%	4,328,272	4,132,586	463,979	3,864,293	10.72%	66.42%
Intergovernmental (State Offsets)	104,629	25,932	78,697	24.78%	104,498	104,498	26,125	78,373	25.00%	99.12%
Total Non - Operating Expenses	38,983,797	8,469,988	30,513,809	21.73%	36,044,814	35,155,445	8,545,238	27,499,576	23.71%	91.65%
Excess (Deficiency) Before OFS&U	(2,332,110)	(2,378,530)	(46,420)	101.99%	(2,256,870)	137,899	(2,752,372)	(495,502)	121.96%	83.63%
Other Financing Sources										
Transfers from Other Funds	1,584,361	1,586,266	(1,905)	100.12%	1,380,183	1,381,782	1,834,222	(454,039)	132.90%	75.33%
Use of Avail. Funds: Encumbrances	702,752	49,478	(653,274)	7.04%	1,196,774	732,000	534,112	(662,662)	44.63%	15.77%
Avail. Funds: F. C./Overlay Surplus	688,701	688,701	0	100.00%	2,357,084	2,357,084	618,855	1,738,229	26.26%	380.81%
Total OFS	2,975,814	2,324,445	(655,179)	78.11%	4,934,041	4,470,866	2,987,189	621,528	60.54%	129.02%
Other Financing Uses										
Overlay & Deficits to be Raised	183,338	183,338	0	100.00%	184,419	184,419	195,901	(11,482)	106.23%	94.14%
Transfers to Other Funds	460,366	0	460,366	0.00%	2,484,785	2,484,785	472,532	2,012,253	19.02%	0.00%
Total OFU	643,704	183,338	460,366	28.48%	2,669,204	2,669,204	668,433	2,000,771	25.04%	113.74%
Excess (Deficiency) Incl. OFS&U	0	(237,423)	(1,161,965)		7,967	1,939,561	(433,616)	(1,874,745)		

Town of Groton
General Fund Statement of Revenues & Expenditures
September 30, 2026

	Current Budget FY27	July - Sep Actual FY27	Variance to FY27 Budget	1st Qtr % of Budget	Final FY26 Budget	July thru June Actual FY26	July - Sep Actual FY26	1st Qtr Variance to FY26 Budget	1st Qtr % of Budget	% of Budget Change
Salaries/Wages Expenditures by Function of Government										
General Government:										
BOS/Town Manager	392,100	107,323	284,777	27.37%	403,952	403,856	109,305	294,647	27.06%	101.15%
Accountant	220,266	64,328	155,938	29.20%	209,085	209,051	53,656	155,429	25.66%	113.80%
Assessors	208,186	51,299	156,887	24.64%	191,004	191,004	47,572	143,432	24.91%	98.92%
Treasurer/Collector	294,068	76,163	217,905	25.90%	305,556	298,977	78,022	227,534	25.53%	101.45%
Personnel	108,670	30,907	77,763	28.44%	102,549	102,549	29,150	73,399	28.43%	100.04%
Information Technology	216,982	56,952	160,030	26.25%	209,900	209,900	55,243	154,657	26.32%	99.73%
Town Clerk/Elections	216,877	55,878	160,999	25.76%	203,471	200,894	62,217	141,254	30.58%	84.24%
Land Use Conservation Comm.	88,132	25,299	62,833	28.71%	85,565	85,565	24,562	61,003	28.71%	100.00%
Land Use Inspection Services	219,975	54,212	165,763	24.64%	232,875	232,155	56,289	176,586	24.17%	101.94%
Land Use Planning	129,111	36,859	29,310	28.55%	125,030	124,350	29,310	95,720	23.44%	121.80%
Total General Government	2,094,367	559,220	1,535,147	26.70%	2,068,987	2,058,301	545,326	1,523,661	26.36%	101.29%
Public Safety:										
Police Department/Civil Defense	2,693,727	763,722	1,930,005	28.35%	2,651,823	2,616,329	711,976	1,939,847	26.85%	105.59%
Fire Department/EMS	1,825,490	435,615	1,389,875	23.86%	1,658,414	1,658,413	390,974	1,267,440	23.58%	101.19%
Animal Cntrl/Dog Officer	33,164	8,929	24,235	26.92%	24,593	24,593	7,299	17,294	29.68%	90.70%
Total Public Safety	4,552,381	1,208,266	3,344,115	26.54%	4,334,830	4,299,335	1,110,249	3,224,581	25.61%	103.63%
Department of Public Works:										
Municipal Buildings	178,832	39,987	138,845	22.36%	170,064	167,354	38,557	131,507	22.67%	98.63%
Highway	762,935	194,567	568,368	25.50%	883,543	870,528	253,672	629,871	28.71%	88.82%
Snow & Ice	140,000	0	140,000	0.00%	287,456	287,456	0	287,456	0.00%	
Solid Waste	159,908	39,742	120,166	24.85%	164,820	156,750	39,727	125,093	24.10%	103.11%
Total DPW	1,241,675	274,296	967,379	22.09%	1,505,883	1,482,088	331,956	1,173,927	22.04%	100.23%
Culture, Rec. & Citizen's Svcs:										
COA/COA Van	342,277	87,354	254,923	25.52%	315,576	314,812	80,177	235,399	25.41%	100.43%
Vets Svcs/Water Safety/Graves	11,872	2,673	9,199	22.52%	11,679	8,145	2,835	8,844	24.27%	92.79%
Library	852,375	217,579	634,796	25.53%	846,541	846,536	215,456	631,085	25.45%	100.31%
Country Club	539,910	227,857	312,053	42.20%	535,385	533,958	219,811	315,574	41.06%	102.78%
Cable Department	161,041	41,131	119,910	25.54%	155,360	151,507	36,089	119,271	23.23%	109.94%
Total Culture, Rec. & Citizen's Svcs	1,907,475	576,594	1,330,881	30.23%	1,864,541	1,854,958	554,368	1,310,173	29.73%	101.68%
Grand Total Salaries & Wages	9,795,898	2,618,376	7,177,522	26.73%	9,774,241	9,694,682	2,541,899	7,232,342	26.01%	102.77%
Benefits:										
County Retirement	2,808,832	2,808,832	0	100.00%	2,640,116	2,640,116	2,640,116	0	100.00%	100.00%
Health / Life Insurance *	1,849,599	444,961	1,404,638	24.06%	1,686,208	1,671,411	427,278	1,258,930	25.34%	94.95%
Other Benefits (Medicare/Unemplmt)	190,000	52,379	137,621	27.57%	201,752	193,275	39,599	162,153	19.63%	140.45%
Total Benefits	4,848,431	3,306,172	1,542,259	68.19%	4,528,076	4,504,802	3,106,993	1,421,083	68.62%	99.37%
Total Salaries/Wages/Benefits	14,644,329	5,924,548	8,719,781	40.46%	14,302,317	14,199,484	5,648,892	8,653,425	39.50%	102.43%

FISCAL YEAR 2027

GOALS OF THE GROTON SELECT BOARD

Governance, Technology & Data Policy

Select Board Member Assigned: John Reilly

Establish, appoint members to, and adopt a formal charge for a committee tasked with evaluating and recommending Town policies governing the responsible use of emerging technologies, including:

- Artificial Intelligence (AI) in municipal government;
- License Plate Reader (LPR) technology;
- Municipal surveillance and security camera systems;
- Data-gathering technologies used by the Town;
- The collection, storage, protection, retention, sharing, and disposal of data generated through these technologies;
- Standards for evaluating technology vendors and ensuring that companies contracted by the Town meet appropriate privacy, cybersecurity, transparency, and data governance expectations.

The committee shall develop recommendations that balance operational efficiency, public safety, innovation, transparency, cybersecurity, privacy, civil liberties, and public trust to ensure residents remain confident in the Town's use of technology.

November 2, 2026 Update - The Town Manager established a Working Group to address most parts of this goal. They have held a public hearing on these matters and are continuing to work on policies, etc. The Select Board needs to consider a charge for a Committee to address AI in municipal government.

Budget Priorities & State Funding

**Select Board Member Assigned: Matt Pisani
Nick Degaitas**

Continue active and sustained collaboration with the Town's state legislative delegation and regional partners to:

- Increase unrestricted local aid and education funding for the Town of Groton and the Groton-Dunstable Regional School District beginning in FY28;
- Advocate for permanent improvements to the Commonwealth's municipal and educational funding formulas;
- Restore previously eliminated positions within the Police Department, Department of Public Works, and Groton-Dunstable Regional School District;
- Support expanded staffing within the Fire Department to meet growing service demands;
- Identify sustainable funding strategies to maintain and enhance essential municipal services while minimizing the local tax burden.

November 2, 2026 Update - The Town Manager established a Budget Working Group for this purpose. The Town Manager provided the Select Board and Finance Committee with the summary of the Group's work over the summer, along with Budget Guidance Priorities. Both the Select Board and Finance Committee approved the proposed Guidance on October 26th. Next step is for the Town Manager to develop the proposed Operating Budget.

Town Manager Succession Planning

**Select Board Member Assigned: Becky Pine
Peter Cunningham**

During the second half of FY27, begin planning for the anticipated transition to a new Town Manager in November 2027 to ensure organizational stability and continuity of leadership by:

- Developing a comprehensive recruitment timeline;
- Reviewing and updating the Town Manager job description and desired qualifications;
- Establishing a transparent and inclusive recruitment and selection process;
- Developing a transition plan that ensures continuity of municipal operations and services.

November 2, 2026 Update - No action has been taken on this yet. With the Board's approval, the Town Manager will propose a time-line/strategy to address this in the next several months.

Economic Development

Select Board Member Assigned: Nick Degaitas

Work collaboratively with Town boards, committees, property owners, businesses, developers, and community stakeholders to strengthen Groton's economic future by:

- Supporting the long-term vision of the Destination Groton initiative;
- Implementing the recommendations of the Master Plan
- Encouraging economic development that reflects Groton's historic character and community values;
- Identifying opportunities to expand the commercial tax base and generate sustainable municipal revenue;
- Supporting redevelopment projects that enhance downtown vitality while preserving its unique identity;
- Advancing planning efforts that encourage responsible business growth and appropriate residential development;
- Recruiting and supporting the establishment of additional restaurants
- Exploring opportunities for additional 55+ residential communities and working toward initiating at least one new development proposal within the next one to two years.
- Supporting the creation of Affordable Housing in Groton.

November 2, 2026 Update - The Select Board recommended and Town Meeting approved funding to hire a part-time Economic Development Director to help address this goal. The Select Board approved the job description and the position has been advertised. The goal is to have a proposed appointment for this position by December.

Public Communication & Civic Engagement

Select Board Member Assigned: Peter Cunningham
Nick Degaitas
Becky Pine

Develop and implement a comprehensive communications strategy that improves transparency, public engagement, and awareness of Town government by:

- Increasing communication regarding Select Board initiatives, major Town projects, and policy decisions;
- Highlighting the accomplishments of Town boards, committees, commissions, and departments;
- Expanding and modernizing the Town's social media presence to better engage residents;
- Enhancing the Town website, newsletters, videos, and other communication platforms to improve accessibility and information sharing;
- Increasing public awareness of available property tax relief including the senior tax work-off program, funding available from the TREAD Committee, monies distributed by the Commissioners of Trust funds, and other financial assistance programs;
- Continue meeting with all Town Boards and Committees, following the rotation schedule developed last year.
- Developing a coordinated outreach and awareness campaign to significantly increase participation at Annual and Special Town Meetings, with the goal of achieving voter turnout exceeding 10% of registered voters.

November 2, 2026 Update -

The Town established a "Town Meeting Dashboard" for the 2026 Fall Town Meeting that provided information for all Warrant Articles in one location. It was well received and established a process for all future town meetings. The Town has also used social media to provide the public with information on various public meetings, etc. The Executive Assistant and Town Manager will begin inviting committees to future board meetings for annual updates.

Transportation & Traffic Safety

Select Board Member Assigned: Peter Cunningham

Using the recommendations from the recent Main Street traffic studies, work collaboratively with the appropriate boards, committees, MassDOT, and regional partners to improve traffic safety, mobility, and pedestrian access by:

- Implementing at least three recommendations identified in the completed traffic studies;
- Striping and clearly defining on-street parking spaces where appropriate;
- Advancing planning and engineering for one or more roundabouts at key intersections;
- Continuing efforts to install a traffic signal at the intersection of Routes 40 and 119; and to move forward on other improvements for the Route 40/Broadmeadow Road intersection;
- Advancing efforts to pave and allow through traffic on the dirt road between Station Ave and Broadmeadow Rd.
- Pursuing additional engineering, pedestrian safety, and traffic-calming improvements identified through ongoing transportation planning efforts.

November 2, 2026 Update -

The Town Manager established a Working Group to address traffic and safety improvements on Main Street. MDM Transportation Consultants was hired to provide a Report on recommending improvements to Main Street. That Study is currently out for public comment. A public hearing has been scheduled for November 19th to present the findings of the MDM Study and receive public input.



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: *All Departments, Boards, Committees and Commissions*

From: *Mark W. Haddad – Town Manager*

Subject: *Fiscal Year 2028 Budget Preparation*

Date: *November 4, 2026*

The Fiscal Year 2028 Budget Process will begin on November 4, 2026. Pursuant to the Groton Charter, the Select Board and Finance Committee met on October 26, 2026 to provide guidance to the Town Manager and Finance Team for the development of the Fiscal Year 2028 Budget. Specific Guidance will be presented later in this memorandum.

We will continue to use Excel Spreadsheets to create the Budget as we have for the last eighteen years. The Finance Team and I will continue to work very closely with all departments, boards, committees and commissions as we develop the budget. All Department Budgets have been created in an Excel Document. Each individual department document contains two, and in some instances three spreadsheets. The first spreadsheet is the overall departmental budget that contains the following information:

1. FY 2024 Expended
2. FY 2025 Expended
3. FY 2026 Expended
4. FY 2027 Appropriated
5. FY 2028 Department Request
6. FY 2028 Town Manager Budget

The first four columns are already populated. The FY 2028 Department Request Column is tied to the second spreadsheet entitled "Expenses". Each Department will need to complete the second spreadsheet with their actual budget request. Any information added to the second spreadsheet will automatically populate the FY 2028 Department Request Column on the first spreadsheet.

For those Departments that have Salary and Wage Line Items, the third spreadsheet (entitled "Payroll") will be the same as previous years. Please note that all Unions have agreed to a three (3%) percent wage adjustment in FY 2028. I will be recommending that By-Law Employees receive a three (3%) percent adjustment as well. The Finance Team will adjust all salaries for this increase. Please confirm that the salary contained in the Fiscal Year 2027 column is the current salary/wage of employees within your Department. Once final decisions have been made under

the Performance Incentive Program, we will adjust budgets as well. Under this format, all budgets can be submitted to the Town Manager electronically.

As stated earlier, the Select Board and Finance Committee have provided guidance to the Town Manager prior to Budget preparation. The Charter requires the Town Manager to comply with the guidance when developing the Proposed Budget. Specifically, they have set the following guidance for the development of the Fiscal Year 2028 Proposed Operating Budget:

A. The Town Manager to prepare and submit a balanced Fiscal Year 2028 Operating Budget that does not rely upon the approval of a Proposition 2½ override. This budget shall be developed using revenues available within the Town's existing property tax levy limit, together with other reasonably anticipated revenue sources, setting aside no more than 40% of new revenues for municipal spending. In preparing this budget, the Town Manager shall:

- 1. Identify the expenditure reductions necessary to balance the municipal operating budget within available revenues.**
- 2. Work collaboratively with the Groton-Dunstable Regional School District to identify the reductions in the District's operating assessment that would be necessary to achieve an overall balanced budget.**
- 3. Clearly identify the municipal positions, programs, services, and operational capabilities that would be reduced or eliminated.**
- 4. Provide an assessment of the anticipated impacts of these reductions on public safety, public works, general government, and other essential municipal services.**
- 5. Work with School District leadership to ensure that the educational and operational consequences of any proposed assessment reductions are clearly communicated to the public.**
- 6. This balanced budget shall serve as the Town's financial baseline for Fiscal Year 2028 and provide residents with a clear understanding of the services that can be supported without additional property tax revenue.**
- 7. Regardless of whether an override is ultimately pursued or approved, the Town Manager shall submit a balanced operating budget consistent with applicable legal requirements.**

B. In conjunction with the preparation of the balanced budget, the Town Manager shall develop a comprehensive, three-year financial plan for Fiscal Years 2028, 2029, and 2030 that evaluates the additional revenue necessary to maintain existing services and make targeted investments in critical municipal and educational needs. The Select Board and Finance Committee shall consider a multi-level Proposition 2½ operating override that provides voters with clearly defined alternatives representing different levels of municipal and educational services. The override analysis shall be developed around the following three funding scenarios as follows:

1. **Maintain Level Services Override.** This funding scenario shall provide the additional revenue necessary to maintain the current level of municipal and educational services over Fiscal Years 2028, 2029, and 2030. This scenario shall be designed to stabilize existing municipal and School District operations and avoid further significant reductions in staffing, programs, and essential services. The Maintain Level Services Override shall not include the restoration of previously eliminated positions or programs, nor shall it address all identified staffing deficiencies or service enhancements. Its purpose shall be limited to preserving the level of services currently provided to Groton residents and students.
2. **Restoration Protection Override: Three Firefighter/EMTs Per Shift.** The second funding scenario shall include the resources necessary to maintain existing municipal and educational services, together with targeted investments to restore critical positions and address immediate public safety staffing needs. The School District restorations shall be based on the District's assessment of its educational and operational priorities, with the School Committee and District Administration responsible for identifying and explaining the specific positions proposed for restoration. The municipal restorations shall focus on positions previously eliminated from the Police Department and Department of Public Works. The additional Firefighter/EMT shall represent the first phase of the recommendations identified through the Fire Department Staffing Study and the Fire Staffing Working Group, establishing three Firefighter/EMTs assigned to each of the Department's four shifts.
3. **Restoration Protection Override: Four Firefighter/EMTs Per Shift:** The third funding scenario shall include all service preservation and staffing investments identified in Scenario #2, together with the additional resources necessary to implement the full staffing recommendation of the Fire Department Staffing Study.

As part of the development of the Final Town Manager's Proposed FY 2028 Operating Budget, the Town Manager shall provide a comprehensive justification and financial analysis of each proposed override alternative.

I will work with the Finance Team and Department Heads (along with the Groton Dunstable Regional School District) to develop the budget. That said, please adhere to the following specific guidelines:

1. In preparing your FY 2028 department budget, the submitted budget shall be a level services budget that maintains services at current levels.

2. I would ask for back-up documentation and justification of all expense line-item requests in your level services budget. A summary of your expense requests will allow me to better understand your department's operations and needs and make better budget decisions.
3. Relative to Salary and Wage line items, as stated above, please confirm the salaries and hours of your department employees for the current Fiscal Year. I would further request that you work with the Human Resources Director to determine if any longevity payments are owed to any of your employees in FY 2028.
4. The Major Initiatives Section will continue for the Fiscal Year 2028 Proposed Budget. Please provide a narrative and budget estimate for any new initiative anticipated in the next five (5) fiscal years over \$50,000 annually, or over \$100,000 in any three-year period. If you do not anticipate any new initiative, please state that in your budget memo.

I would respectfully request that all Departments, Boards, Committees and Commissions comply with the following schedule:

November 4, 2026 -	Budget Guidelines Released to Departments.
November 30, 2026 -	Budgets Due in the Office of the Town Manager.
December 7, 2026 - December 9, 2026	Meetings with Town Manager to Review Budgets.
January 31, 2027 -	FY 2028 Town of Groton Proposed Operating Budget Delivered to Select Board and Finance Committee.

Thank you for your attention and cooperation. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns regarding this matter. I look forward to working with all of you as we develop the Town of Groton FY 2028 Operating Budget.

MWH/rjb

cc: Select Board
Finance Committee

APPROVAL OF QUITCLAIM DEED
BY THE SELECT BOARD

I, Peter Cunningham, Chair of the Select Board of the Town of Groton, hereby certify that at a meeting duly held on _____, 2026, the Select Board voted to approve the Quitclaim Deed attached hereto from Ebrahim Masalehdan, Trustee of The Noble Monarch Nominee Trust, to the Town of Groton, a Massachusetts municipal corporation, acting by and through its duly authorized Conservation Commission, pursuant to Section 8C of Chapter 40 of the General Laws of Massachusetts.

TOWN OF GROTON SELECT BOARD

By: _____
Name: Peter Cunningham
Its: Chair, duly authorized by a vote of the
Select Board on _____, 2026

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Middlesex, ss.

On this ____ day of _____, 2026, before me, the undersigned notary public, Peter Cunningham, Chair of the Select Board of the Town of Groton, personally appeared, proved to me through satisfactory evidence of identification, which was _____, to be the person whose name is signed on the preceding or attached document, and acknowledged to me that he signed it voluntarily for its stated purpose as the voluntary act of the Town of Groton Select Board.

Notary Public

Printed Name: _____

My Commission Expires: _____

[Seal]

QUITCLAIM DEED

I, **Ebrahim Masalehdan, Trustee of The Noble Monarch Nominee Trust**, u/d/t dated June 9, 2005, recorded with the Middlesex County (Southern District) Registry of Deeds at Book 45358, Page 217, as noted in a Trustee's Certificate recorded herewith, of 84 Monarch Path, Groton, Massachusetts 01450 (the "Grantor"), for consideration paid of ONE HUNDRED AND 00/100 DOLLARS (\$100.00), hereby grants to the **TOWN OF GROTON**, a Massachusetts municipal corporation, acting by and through its duly authorized Conservation Commission, with an address of 173 Main Street, Groton, Massachusetts 01450 (the "Grantee"),

with Quitclaim covenants,

That certain parcel of land in Groton, Middlesex County, Massachusetts, being shown as "AREA TO BE HELD BY THE TOWN" on a plan of land entitled "Tax Map 253 Lot 2 & Map 135 Lot 38 - Gilson Road - Lotting Plan (Sheet 1 of 3) - Monarch Path Groton, Massachusetts Owned By/Prepared For Ebrahim Masalehdan, Trustee of The Noble Monarch Nominee Trust," dated March 9, 2007, prepared by TFM Civil Engineers, recorded in the Middlesex (South District) Registry of Deeds as Plan Number 779, of 2007 (the "Plan"), reference to which Plan is hereby made for a more particular description of the premises.

The premises, which abuts lots 3, 4 and 5 on said Plan, contains approximately 2.0024 acres (87,224 square feet), of land, more or less, according to said Plan.

The premises are conveyed together with the benefit of a permanent and non-exclusive access easement over "Access Easement 3-1" as shown on the Plan, for the benefit of Grantee. The access easement includes the right to use said Access Easement 3-1 for all purposes which streets and ways are commonly used in the Town of Groton.

The premises are conveyed together with the right to pass and repass over Monarch Path as shown on the Plan, for all purposes in which streets and ways are commonly used in the Town of Groton, in common with others entitled thereto.

The easements conveyed herein are covenants running with the land that (i) benefit Grantee's land, (ii) burden Grantor's land, (iii) are binding on the successors and assigns of Grantor and Grantee, and (iv) benefit the successors and assigns of Grantee.

The premises are conveyed subject to and with the benefit of rights of way of record and all other rights, easements, restrictions, takings, agreements, and covenants of record, to the extent the same are presently in force and applicable, expressly not intending or meaning to extend the same in the event they have expired by operation of law or otherwise.

The Grantor hereby states under the pains and penalties of perjury that the conveyed premises are not homestead property of the Grantor and Grantor certifies under the pains and penalties of perjury that there are no other persons entitled to claim any rights of homestead in said premises.

Meaning and intending to convey a **portion** of the same premises conveyed to the within Grantor by deed of Judith Lennett, as Conservator of the Estate of Laura W. Cunningham, dated June 9, 2005, and recorded with the Middlesex County South District Registry of Deeds at Book 45358; Page 228.

[SIGNATURE PAGE FOLLOWS]

Witness my hand and seal, this the 19 day of October, 2026.

 Trustee of Noble Monarch Nominee Trust

Ebrahim Masalehdan, Trustee of
The Noble Monarch Nominee Trust,
u/d/t dated June 9, 2005

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

MIDDLESEX, SS

On this 19 day of October, 2026, before me, the undersigned notary public, personally appeared Ebrahim Masalehdan, Trustee of The Noble Monarch Nominee Trust, u/d/t dated June 9, 2005, proved to me through satisfactory evidence of identification, which was a Massachusetts Driver's License, to be the person whose name is signed on the preceding or attached document, and acknowledged to me that he signed it voluntarily as his free act and deed for its stated purpose, as the voluntary act of The Noble Monarch Nominee Trust.



Notary Public: Kempton P. Giggey
My Commission expires:

2/19/32



KEMPTON P. GIGGEY
NOTARY PUBLIC
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
My Commission Expires
February 19, 2032

TRUSTEE'S CERTIFICATE

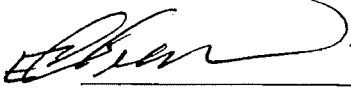
THE NOBLE MONARCH NOMINEE TRUST

I, Ebrahim Masalehdan, Individually and as the Trustee of The Noble Monarch Nominee Trust, do hereby certify as follows:

1. That I am the Trustee of The Noble Monarch Nominee Trust, under a Declaration of Trust dated June 9, 2005, and recorded with the Middlesex County (Southern District) Registry of Deeds at Book 45358, Page 217 (the "Trust");
2. That said Trust is in full force and effect and has not been terminated, modified or amended in any respect;
3. That I, as Trustee of said Trust, am authorized, empowered and directed by all of the Beneficiaries of said Trust to convey title to that certain property known as "Area to be Held by Town" as shown on Plan of Land recorded with the Middlesex County Southern District Registry of Deeds as Plan number 779 of 2007, and in connection therewith to execute and deliver any and all documents with respect to said transaction, including but not limited to, a Deed by the undersigned conveying that certain property to the Town of Groton, acting by and through its duly authorized Conservation Commission, for nominal consideration and all on such terms and conditions as I, the Trustee, deem to be best or desirable;
4. Further, that under Section 4.2.1 of the Trust, Ebrahim Masalehdan, as Trustee, is authorized to buy, sell, **convey**, assign, mortgage, or otherwise dispose of all or any part of the Trust Estate, and execute any and all other instruments which he, as Trustee, deems necessary or incidental to the effectuation of the transaction of the Trust Property as aforesaid;
5. No beneficiary of the Trust is a minor, a corporation selling all or substantially all of its Massachusetts assets, or a personal representative of an estate subject to estate tax liens, deceased, or under any legal disability;
6. This Certificate is executed under the pains and penalties of perjury.

[SIGNATURE PAGE FOLLOWS]

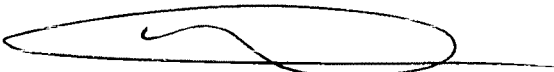
Signed under the pains and penalties of perjury this the 19 day of October, 2026.

 Trustee of The Noble Monarch Nominee Trust
Ebrahim Masalehdan, Trustee of
The Noble Monarch Nominee Trust
u/d/t dated June 9, 2005

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

MIDDLESEX, SS

On this 19 day of October, 2026, before me, the undersigned notary public, personally appeared Ebrahim Masalehdan, Trustee of The Noble Monarch Nominee Trust, u/d/t dated June 9, 2005, proved to me through satisfactory evidence of identification, which was a Massachusetts Driver's License, to be the person whose name is signed on the preceding or attached document, and who swore or affirmed to me that the contents of the document are truthful and accurate to the best of his knowledge and belief.



Notary Public: Kempton P. Gigsey
My Commission expires:

2/19/32



KEMPTON P. GIGSEY
NOTARY PUBLIC
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
My Commission Expires
February 19, 2032

Kara Cruikshank

From: Town of Groton <mchiasson@grotonma.gov>
Sent: Thursday, September 24, 2026 4:23 PM
To: Select Board
Subject: New Committee Interest Form Entry

Name

Stephanie Georgopoulos

Phone Number

6175717602

Email

stephanieeve21@gmail.com

What Committee are you Joining?

Groton Cultural Council

Please give us a brief explanation of why you are interested.

I am a working artist (co-founder of a clothing line/textile designer) with interest in supporting artists & my community. I was a member of Littleton Cultural Council prior to moving to Groton in 2024 & thoroughly enjoyed the experience. I look forward to being involved in Groton.

Kara Cruikshank

From: Town of Groton <mchiasson@grotonma.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, September 30, 2026 7:09 PM
To: Select Board
Subject: New Committee Interest Form Entry

Name

Phil Francisco

Phone Number

16178998572

Email

pmfrancisco@alumni.stanford.edu

What Committee are you Joining?

Groton Cultural Council

Please give us a brief explanation of why you are interested.

One of the critical things that make a town a “community” is how well it embraces arts and culture - whether it be spoken word, visual, cinema, or music; spanning history to the comedy to the tragedy and persistence.

For nearly a decade I have been a member of the Groton Hill Music Center's board of directors, including the final years and transition from "bursting the seams" of the small "Indian Hill Music" facility in Littleton, to the building of the new, state of the art concert and educational facility on Old Ayer Road, and with the trials and tribulations of dealing with the COVID shutdown and opening of the new music center. I hope I would be able to aid in the evaluation of grants and in helping promote cultural activities and the arts in town.

Full disclosure — I have dual US-Portugal citizenship and we have a property there where I frequently spend extended periods of time, or to use as a basis for visits elsewhere in Europe/Africa. As such, there may be times when I would need to attend Council meetings remotely (e.g., Zoom - the late starts from Europe are not an issue for me) or not at all if in-person attendance would be required. As you evaluate my candidacy, I thought it important for you to know that.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of my candidacy to the Council.

- Phil Francisco

Phil Francisco

Kara Cruikshank

From: Town of Groton <mchiasson@grotonma.gov>
Sent: Thursday, October 8, 2026 7:44 AM
To: Select Board
Subject: New Committee Interest Form Entry

Name

Andrea Mischel

Phone Number

9788771843

Email

andreakmischel@gmail.com

What Committee are you Joining?

Cultural Council

Please give us a brief explanation of why you are interested.

Hi I'm interested in joining the Cultural Council as I've always been interested in helping with events around town and finally have more time to commit to it. I would love to see more music, literary, science. etc. programs in town that will be of interest to all age groups and enhance our community! Thanks!

Kara Cruikshank

From: Town of Groton <mchiasson@grotonma.gov>
Sent: Thursday, September 24, 2026 1:50 PM
To: Select Board
Subject: New Committee Interest Form Entry

Name

Daniel DiGiacomo

Phone Number

5082696655

Email

ddigiaco988@gmail.com

What Committee are you Joining?

Groton Local Cultural Council

Please give us a brief explanation of why you are interested.

As a recent transplant to Groton, I've been looking for opportunities to contribute and advance the community. I also have an interest in local history, and it would be rewarding to potentially reward grants that could help fund our local history here.

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2026
UN-APPROVED**

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

Select Board Members Absent: Matt Pisani;

Finance Committee Members Present: David Manugian, Chair; Bud Robertson, Vice Chair; Gary Green; Scott Whitefield; Kristina Lengyel; Nancy Muller;

Finance Committee Members Absent: Jamie McDonald;

School Committee Members Present: Lacey McCabe, Chair; Rosanna Casavecchia, Vice Chair; An Hee Foley; Rebecca Weksner;

School Committee Members Absent: Christina Andriole; Justin Owens; Rohit Bhasin;

Also Present: Mark Haddad, Town Manager; Kara Cruikshank, Executive Assistant to the Town Manager; Patricia DuFresne, Assistant Director of Finance/Town Accountant; Sherry Kersey, Groton Dunstable Regional School District Business Manager; Dr. Geoff Bruno, Groton Dunstable Regional School District Superintendent; Tammi Mickel, Principal Assessor; Melisa Doig, Human Resources Director; Katie Kazanjian, Treasurer/Tax Collector; Diane Hewitt, Groton Resident and Amirtha Chennakesavan, Groton Intern.

Chair Cunningham called the meeting to order at 6:45 PM and reviewed the agenda.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Cunningham took a moment to say how spectacular the foliage has been this autumn and hoped people had been exploring the Town's trails. He also reminded everyone that Quarter 2 Property Taxes were due Monday, November 2nd.

Ms. Pine announced that Early Voting is taking place at Town Hall during regular business hours this week, with Friday as the final day. Those unable to vote this week can vote on Tuesday, November 2nd. She also noted that Halloween falls on Saturday, October 31st, and that trick-or-treating will take place that day from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Mr. Haddad added that this information and road closures are posted on the Police Department's website.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

None

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Fiscal Year 2028 Update.

The budget update will take place at 7:00 p.m. during joint session with the Finance Committee.

2. Update on Select Board Schedule through the End of the Year.

Monday, November 2, 2026-	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, November 9, 2026-	No Meeting
Monday, November 16, 2026-	Regularly Scheduled Meeting

Thursday, November 19, 2026-	Public Hearing on Main Street Study (PAC)
Monday, November 23, 2026-	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, November 30, 2026-	No Meeting
Monday, December 7, 2026-	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, December 14, 2026-	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, December 21, 2026-	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, December 28, 2026-	No Meeting (Christmas Holiday)
Monday, January 4, 2027-	No Meeting (New Year's Holiday)
Monday, January 22, 2027-	Regularly Scheduled Meeting

ITEMS FOR SELECT BOARD CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL

- 1. Consider Approving a One-Day Wine and Malt Beverage License for the Friends of Prescott's "Cheese and Wine Tasting: An Evening in Beaujolais, France," to be held on Thursday, November 5, 2026, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.**
- 2. Consider Approving a One-Day Wine and Malt Beverage License for the Friends of Prescott's Spelling Bee, to be held on Thursday, November 5, 2026, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.**
- 3. Consider Approving a One-Day Wine and Malt Beverage License for the Friends of Prescott's "Paint and Sip: Colors of Autumn," to be held on Saturday, November 14, 2026, from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.**
- 4. Consider Approving a One-Day Wine and Malt Beverage License for the Friends of Prescott's "A Taste of Sparkling Wines," to be held on Thursday, December 10, 2026, from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.**

Ms. Pine moved to approve four One-Day Wine and Malt Beverage Licenses for the Friends of Prescott, as presented above. Mr. Degaitas seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

On-Going Issues

- PFAS Issue – None
- UMass Satellite Emergency Facility -None
- Fire Department Staffing – None
- West Groton Dam Removal-None
- Main Street Study –None
- Flock Cameras – None

SELECT BOARD LIAISON REPORTS

None

Approval of the Regularly Scheduled Meeting of October 19, 2026.

Ms. Pine made a motion to approve the minutes from the regularly scheduled meeting on October 19, 2026. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The Board recessed briefly at 6:54 and reconvened at 7:00 p.m. for the budget discussion with the Finance Committee.

7:00 P.M. in Joint Session with the Finance Committee- Pursuant to Section 6.4.1 of the Groton Charter- Determine Budget Guidance for the Town Manager to develop the Fiscal Year 2028 Proposed Operating Budget

Mr. Haddad distributed a memo titled "Fiscal Year 2028 Budget Guidance to the Boards." He explained that he and Jason Silva, Dunstable's Town Administrator, had formed a Town Manager's/Town Administrator's Budget Working Group. Over the summer, they met with representatives from Dunstable, Groton, and the School District to better understand the financial challenges facing both towns. He reviewed anticipated increases in the Groton Dunstable Regional School District (GDRSD) assessment and the municipal budget with the Boards, noting that the figures were preliminary and would continue to be refined. Mr. Haddad said at this stage, the projected FY 2028 deficit is \$2,163,592. The projection reflected a 9.24% increase in the GDRSD assessment, 3% contractual COLAs, a \$132,115 pension increase, an estimated 10% placeholder for health insurance, an anticipated \$180,000 for regional dispatch, and an anticipated \$23,490 increase for Nashoba Tech. Mr. Haddad said the preliminary analysis projected significant Fiscal Year 2028 budget deficits for both Groton and Dunstable. Although the projections would be refined as more financial information became available, the anticipated shortfalls were large enough that the communities needed to begin addressing the challenges immediately. He emphasized the need for a shared understanding that resources for municipal operations and public education are limited. Balancing these competing needs would require difficult decisions, meaningful cooperation, and a commitment from all parties to develop fiscally responsible, sustainable budgets. Mr. Haddad said the GDRSD has cut 40 positions from its budget over the past three years.

Mr. Haddad explained that, based on the Working Group's discussions and financial analysis, Groton and Dunstable face two options in FY 2028: pursue a Proposition 2½ override or make significant reductions to the operating budgets of both municipalities and the Regional School District. He noted that neither option is without considerable challenges. However, given the projected deficit, he believes the towns must seriously consider an override to preserve the essential services residents expect from the Town and School District. The Budget Working Group reviewed how other towns, including Marblehead, Melrose, and Grafton, pursued overrides and examined the factors behind their success. Mr. Cunningham said communication was key. Mr. Haddad emphasized the importance of the Select Board, Finance Committee, the Town of Dunstable, and the Groton Dunstable Regional School District working together and proceeding transparently so residents understand the Town's financial challenges and the consequences of not securing the revenue needed to maintain services.

Based on the Town Manager's/Town Administrator's Budget Working Group's review of projected revenues and expenditures, the anticipated structural deficits in both communities, and the successful experiences of other municipalities with Proposition 2½ overrides, Mr. Haddad recommends that the Select Board and Finance Committee adopt the Fiscal Year 2028 Budget Guidance outlined in his Memo. He also reviewed

and discussed Alternatives One and Two. (Refer to the included Budget Memo with these minutes for the Proposed Guidance). But first, he emphasized the importance of being transparent with residents about the Town's financial challenges and the consequences of not obtaining the revenue needed to maintain services.

Comments/Questions

Ms. Pine proposed changing Level Two in Alternative Two from "Restoration Investment Override" to "Restoration Protection Override." Mr. Haddad and the Boards agreed to the amendment.

Mr. Haddad reviewed the recommendations for the Proposed Override Funding Levels and explained the strategy for voting on a multi-tiered override:

Question #1- Maintain Level Services- \$6,450,000

Question #2- Restoration Protection Override- One Additional FF/EMT- \$7,900,000

Question #3- Restoration Protection Override- Five Additional FF/EMT- \$8,530,000

Chair Manugian presented the Finance Committee's findings and will proceed as follows: they will review each level in the memo, and he made clear that there is no intent to separate the school and the town's budgets; they will be presented as one. He also said that once the School Committee certifies its budget in March 2027, the figures will remain unchanged unless a donation or grant is received to fund a service. Mr. Haddad added that once the school certifies its budget, the override numbers will be locked in and the Select Board will vote on an override. Mr. Manugian said the Finance Committee will continue discussing the proposal to add firefighters.

Chair Lacey McCabe called the School Committee to order.

Ms. McCabe proposed that the School Committee work with the Boards to agree that any additional state funding would be applied to the budget to reduce the amount of the override used in a given year. She also proposed a public Memorandum of Agreement (MOU) among the three Boards documenting these commitments. Mr. Haddad thought it was a great idea and hoped an MOU would give voters confidence. He further explained that Dunstable will have two tiers, not three like Groton. Ms. Pine said people are lining up to advocate for the override, which she said was a great sign. Mr. Cunningham emphasized they need to be clear in their message regarding the override.

Finance Committee Vote

Mr. Robertson moved to adopt the Fiscal Year 2028 Budget Guidance Memo, with Ms. Pine's amendment changing Level Two in Alternative Two from "Restoration Investment Override" to "Restoration Protection Override." Ms. Lengyel seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Select Board Vote

Mr. Degaitas moved to adopt the Fiscal Year 2028 Budget Guidance Memo, with Ms. Pine's amendment changing Level Two in Alternative Two from "Restoration Investment Override" to "Restoration Protection Override." Ms. Pine seconded.

Discussion

Ms. Pine thought it would be useful to give the top override scenario a specific title so they all have different names.

The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Haddad outlined the next steps: He will draft the Budget Instructions memo for the Board to review at their November 2nd meeting. The Department Head Budget Kick-Off is on Wednesday, November 4th, with department budgets due to the Town Manager's Office by November 30th. Budget reviews with the Town Manager will begin on December 7th, and on January 31, 2027, the FY 2028 Town of Groton Proposed Operating Budget will be delivered to the Select Board and the Finance Committee.

Resident Diane Hewitt said it was heartening to hear that everyone was on the same page and working hard to address this difficult problem, and she thanked everyone. She reported that a small advocacy group was forming in support of an override. She asked what the group's key communication link would be for receiving accurate information. At each Monday Select Board meeting, Mr. Haddad will provide a budget update and advised Ms. Hewitt to follow these updates closely. Ms. Hewitt expressed interest in learning how other communities were getting the word out. Mr. Haddad said he would connect her with someone from the Town of Grafton, and Ms. McCabe said she would forward information about the towns of Marblehead and Melrose.

Chair Cunningham thanked the Finance Committee.

The Select Board adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

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