

# Select Board Meeting Packet

December 7, 2020

*This is the Select Board preliminary preparation information packet. The content of this package is subject to change between when it is released and the start of the Select Board meeting. Such changes will not be posted to the web site before the meeting. If you see an item or items in the preliminary preparation package that are important to you, please attend the meeting in person.*



**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

Alison S. Manugian, *Chair*  
Joshua A. Degen, *Vice Chair*  
Rebecca H. Pine, *Clerk*  
John R. Giger, *Member*  
John F. Reilly, *Member*

**SELECT BOARD MEETING  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2020  
AGENDA**

**VIRTUAL MEETING  
BROADCAST ON ZOOM AND THE GROTON CHANNEL  
PURSUANT TO GOVERNOR'S EXECUTIVE ORDER  
CONCERNING THE OPEN MEETING LAW  
ZOOM MEETING ID: 898 1333 6854**

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| 7:00 P.M.     | Announcements and Review Agenda for the Public   |
| 7:05 P.M.     | Public Comment Period  |
| I. 7:10 P.M.  | Town Manager's Report  |
|               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Select Board's Agenda Schedule</li><li>2. Address Any Changes in Emergency Protocols – Update on Town Action</li><li>3. Review Any New Information from the Commonwealth</li><li>4. Consider Appointing Richard Perini to the Affordable Housing Trust</li><li>5. Consider Approving Contract with Treasurer-Collector In-Training</li><li>6. Update from Town Manager on FY 2022 Budget Development</li><li>7. Update on Select Board Schedule through End of Year</li></ul> |
| II. 7:15 P.M. | Discussion/Decision – Consider Proposal to Increase Fees at Transfer Station   |

### OTHER BUSINESS

#### ON-GOING ISSUES – For Review and Informational Purposes

- A. Prescott School Sprinkler System Project
- B. Water Department – Manganese Issue – PFAS Issue
- C. Polystyrene Containers
- D. Green Communities Application and Implementation
- E. Florence Roche Elementary School Feasibility Study

### SELECT BOARD LIAISON REPORTS

- |      |          |  |
|------|----------|--|
| III. | Minutes: | Virtual Meeting of November 23, 2020<br>Virtual Meeting of November 30, 2020 |
|------|----------|--|

### ADJOURNMENT

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



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**Town Manager**  
Mark W. Haddad

**To:** *Select Board*

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

**Subject:** *Weekly Report*

**Date:** *December 7, 2020*

1. In addition to the Town Manager's Report and a review of the On-going Issues List, there is one item scheduled on Monday's Agenda. As the Board will recall, a couple of months ago, the Board discussed the issue of whether or not to continue providing trash removal services through our Transfer Station, or provide Curb-Side Pick-up. At that time, I told the Board that if we continued with the Transfer Station, we would be bringing forward a proposal to increase fees. My Executive Assistant Dawn Dunbar conducted a survey of surrounding Towns and what they charge for their Trash Removal Services. Based on this, Dawn has developed a proposal to increase various fees to bring Groton in line with surrounding Towns. Enclosed with this report is a memorandum from Dawn outlining her recommendations, which I fully support. I will be requesting that the Board adopt the proposal effective next Spring when stickers are slated to be renewed. We can discuss this in more detail at Monday's meeting.
2. As of the writing of this report, I have no specific update on Town Action relative to the COVID-19 Pandemic. We continue to operate under the protocols approved by the Select Board and there are no issues to report.
3. We continue to monitor the weekly health report issued by the Department of Public Health. Enclosed with this report is the latest report dated December 3, 2020. For the second week in a row, Groton is a "yellow" community. We continue to trend higher with 54 cases in the last two weeks. This troubling trend will most likely continue due to the Thanksgiving Holiday. At this time, I would recommend that we continue to operate Town Hall by appointment only until such time as we see a significant decrease in cases. We will continue to monitor the reports and make any recommended changes to our protocols as warranted.
4. The Housing Trust has recommended that the Select Board appoint Richard Perini to the vacancy on the Trust. Enclosed with this report is Mr. Perini's interest form. He has spent his career in the construction business. Currently, he works as a consultant for a large New Jersey-based company that builds large apartment buildings. They just finished a large building in Billerica. He and his wife moved to Groton a few months ago to be near family. I would respectfully request that the Board consider appointing Mr. Perini to the Trust with a term to expire on June 30, 2021.



5. At your November 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting, the Board approved our proposed reorganization of the Treasurer/Collector's Office with my appointment of Hannah Moller as the Treasurer/Collector In Training. Since her current position as Assistant Treasurer Tax Collector is a union position, we need to remove her from the Union and put her under contract with the Town to allow her to participate in Budget Deliberations and perform the duties associated with the Training Program. To that end, we have drafted an employment agreement for seven months until she is appointed as the Permanent Treasurer Tax Collector next July. Enclosed with this report is the proposed Agreement that I would ask the Select Board to approve at Monday's meeting. Please note that there is no increase in pay from what she is making now and she will continue to receive the same benefits currently offered to her as an employee of the Town.
6. As you know, the Finance Team and I spent the past several days reviewing the various budgets submitted by our Departments, Boards and Committees. As is the case every year, our Department Heads continue to do an outstanding job preparing and presenting their budgets. In addition, I was very pleased to have several members of the Finance Committee and Select Board attend some, if not all, of the Budget meetings. The Select Board and Finance Committee had provided the following guidance for the FY 2022 Budget Preparation:
  - A. The Town Manager shall prepare a balanced budget for Fiscal Year 2022 with no proposed Override of Proposition 2½.
  - B. There shall be no increase in the Municipal Budget for Fiscal Year 2022. It shall be level funded at the Fiscal Year 2021 level of \$15,175,486 without In-Levy Debt Service and \$15,521,525 including In-Levy Debt Service.
  - C. The Town Manager shall work with representatives of the Groton Dunstable Regional School District and Nashoba Valley Technical School District to balance the budget.
  - D. There shall be no new benefited positions proposed in the Fiscal Year 2022 Budget as the hiring freeze shall remain in effect.
  - E. Depending on how the budget is balanced, the Select Board and Finance Committee have acknowledged that Free Cash may have to be used to maintain services.

I am pleased to report that we have developed a Municipal Budget that is level funded at the FY 2021 appropriation with no new benefited positions and the hiring freeze will remain in effect. I will have a detailed breakdown of this budget when I submit it to the Finance Committee and Select Board on December 31<sup>st</sup>. That said, the budget is not in balance and I need further guidance from the Select Board. Specifically, the Groton Dunstable Regional School District is still in their budget development and they are working hard to get me a proposed number prior to December 31<sup>st</sup>. For planning purposes, I am using the anticipated budget they had in their five-year projection last year. In FY 2022, the Assessment was estimated to be \$24,171,732. Based on their projections, this was to be an increase of 5.81% (or \$1,328,618). The issue is that the original FY 21 Assessment was \$22,843,114, however, due to the use of their Excess and Deficiency Fund to offset last year's budget, their actual assessment was \$22,020,595. To fund the budget at their projected budget would require an increase of \$2,151,137 over the FY 21 Assessment or an increase of 9.77%. This would cause a budget deficit of \$731,683. To balance the budget, I can only set aside an increase of \$1,419,545 or 6.45%. I will share this information with the District. I will need further guidance from the Select Board prior to finalizing the budget. I look forward to discussing this in more detail with the Board at Monday's meeting.

**Select Board  
Weekly Report  
December 7, 2020  
page three**

7. Please see the update to the Select Board's Meeting Schedule through the new year:

Monday, December 7, 2020	-Already Posted
Monday, December 14, 2020	-Annual Licenses -Consider Request for Fee Waiver from Publick House -Consider Request from Library Trustees to lift Hiring Freeze to fill the Head of Circulation position
Monday, December 21, 2020	-Discussion on Police Department Staffing
Monday, December 28, 2020	-No Meeting
Monday, January 4, 2021	-No Meeting
Monday, January 11, 2021	-Presentation of Town Manager's FY 2022 Proposed Operating Budget

MWH/rjb  
enclosures





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**Town Manager**  
Mark W. Haddad

**TO:** Mark W. Haddad, *Town Manager*

**FROM:** Dawn Dunbar, *Executive Assistant to the Town Manager*

**DATE:** December 3, 2020

**RE:** *Transfer Station Sticker and Bag Fee Increases*

I would like to offer the following proposal for consideration regarding fee increases at the Transfer Station. Please note that I have taken into consideration that our annual budget for the Transfer Station is approximately \$319,000 and that the Transfer Station serves approximately 1532 households currently. I have also taken into consideration that the least expensive licensed hauler providing curbside pickup in Groton right now, charges \$42/month. That is an annual cost of \$504 per year for curbside pickup.

Below are my proposed fee increases:

<b>Sticker Fee Increases</b>		
<b>Sticker Type</b>	<b>Current Fee</b>	<b>Proposed Fee</b>
1st Sticker	\$60.00	\$80.00
Additional Sticker	\$10.00	\$25.00
Replacement Sticker	\$2.00	\$5.00
Senior Sticker	\$15.00	\$20.00
<b>Bag Fee Increases</b>		
<b>Bag Size</b>	<b>Current Fee/10 bags</b>	<b>Proposed Fee/10 bags</b>
15 Gallon Bag	\$11.00	\$15.00
32 Gallon Bag	\$19.00	\$25.00
45 Gallon Bag	\$27.00	\$30.00

I further took these proposed fee increases and tried to break down what it would cost the average household per year and also per month, using a household of 5 as an example:

- If a household of 5 were to purchase 2 stickers (1st Sticker at \$80 and 2nd sticker at \$25)/year, the annual cost for stickers would be \$105/year.
- And if that same household of 5 were to use (2) 32-gallon bags per week or 104 bags per year, they would spend \$275/year on 11 rolls of bags.
- The annual household cost to use the Transfer Station for this family of 5 would be \$380/year or \$31.67/month.

Based on this example, this household would see an average savings to use the Transfer Station versus a private hauler of approximately \$123.96/year or \$10.33/month. If all 1532 households currently using the Transfer Station continue to use it and the Select Board were to approve the proposed fee increases, this would allow us to operate at close to a breakeven and not a deficit as we have seen in recent years.

I have attached a fee comparison spreadsheet that I put together which includes averages at the bottom. I feel that based on these averages, my proposal is well within what other communities are charging for fees and would hopefully not make a majority of our residents currently using the Transfer Station seek the services of a private trash hauler. I have also included a second spreadsheet to show what bag and sticker sales were for FY20 (to show what sales for a full year would be) at current rates and with the proposed fee increases.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposal. I look forward to discussing this with you and the Select Board at their meeting on December 7, 2020.

Enclosures

### Transfer Station Fees Comparison - September 2020

Town	Population (2016)	Enterprise (Y/N)	Effective Date	First Sticker	Second Sticker	Senior Sticker	Senior Sec. Sticker	Replacement Sticker	Bag Fees
Acton	23,549	Y	September 1, 2020	\$100.00	\$15.00	\$10.00		\$10.00	
Ayer	8,001	Y	April 28, 2020	\$95.00	\$30.00	\$60.00			55 Gallon = \$25.00 for 5; 33 Gallon = \$20.00 for 5; 15 Gallon = \$15.00 for 5
Berlin	3,020	N	July 1, 2020	\$195.00	\$50.00	\$110.00			
Bolton	5,180	N	Unknown						30 Gallon = 2.50/sticker; 15 Gallon = \$1.25/sticker
Boxborough	5,206	N	July 1, 2019	\$150.00		Free			
Danvers	27,849	N	January 1, 2019						
Groton	11,296	N	July 1, 2018	\$60.00	\$10.00	\$15.00		\$2.00	45 Gallon = \$27.00 for 10; 32 Gallon = \$19.00 for 10; 15 Gallon = \$11.00 for 10
Harvard	6,573	N	April 7, 2020	\$65.00				\$40.00	33 Gallon = \$2.00/each; 15 Gallon = \$1.00/each
Littleton	9,912	N	July 1, 2020	\$140.00	\$70.00	\$70.00	\$35.00	\$5.00	33 Gallon = \$3.25/each; 15 Gallon = \$2.25/each; 8.5 Gallon = \$1.25/each
Middleton	9,738	N	Unknown	\$125.00	\$25.00				
Needham	30,564	N	January 1, 2020	\$0.00		Free			30 Gallon = \$20.00 for 10; 15 Gallon = \$10.75 for 10
Pepperell	12,165	Y	Unknown	\$90.00		\$70.00		\$20.00	13 Gallon = \$10.00 for 10
Royalston	1,274	N	Unknown	\$50.00	\$25.00				
Southborough	10,038	N	Unknown	\$250.00	\$0.00	Free		\$10.00	
Sudbury	18,874	Y	Unknown	\$170.00	\$20.00			\$170.00	30 Gallon = \$2.40/each; 15 Gallon = \$1.20/each
Wayland	13,684	N	July 1, 2020	\$165.00					
Weston	12,057	N	October 1, 2020	\$255.00	\$45.00	\$155.00		\$20.00	
Winchester	22,417	N	Unknown	\$235.00	\$20.00			\$15.00	SMART Program include bags = 16 Gallon = \$10.00 for 10; 33 Gallon = \$20.00 for 10

Mean Average

\$134.06

\$31.00

\$70.00

\$32.44

Mean Average Without Outliers

\$131.43

\$28.75

\$65.00

\$17.14



Trash Bag Sales - Based on FY 20 Sales

<u>Bag Size</u>	<u># of Bag Rolls Sold at Transfer Station*</u>	<u># of Bag Rolls Sold by Clerks Office*</u>	<u># of Bag Rolls Sold by Waste Zero*</u>	<u>Total Number of Bag Rolls Sold</u>	<u>FY20 Bag Fee Rates (10 bags)</u>	<u>Bag Sales @ Current Fees</u>	<u>Proposed Fee Rates (10 bags)</u>	<u>Bag Sales @ Proposed Fee Increase</u>	<u>Difference</u>
15 Gallon	430	91	1440	1961	\$11.00	\$21,571.00	\$15.00	\$29,415.00	\$7,844.00
32 Gallon	1131	205	2700	4036	\$19.00	\$76,684.00	\$25.00	\$100,900.00	\$24,216.00
45 Gallon	1021	98	2160	3279	\$27.00	\$88,533.00	\$30.00	\$98,370.00	\$9,837.00
					Totals	\$186,788.00		\$228,685.00	\$41,897.00

\*Bags are sold in rolls of 10

Sticker Sales - Based on FY 20 Sales

<u>Sticker Type</u>	<u># of Stickers Sold</u>	<u>FY20 Sticker Fee Rate</u>	<u>Sticker Sales @ Current Fees</u>	<u>Proposed Sticker Fee Rate</u>	<u>Sticker Sales @ Proposed Fee Increase</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Full Sticker	805	\$60.00	\$48,300.00	\$80.00	\$64,400.00	\$16,100.00
Add'l Sticker	223	\$10.00	\$2,230.00	\$25.00	\$5,575.00	\$3,345.00
Senior Sticker	727	\$15.00	\$10,905.00	\$20.00	\$14,540.00	\$3,635.00
Replacement Sticker	53	\$2.00	\$106.00	\$5.00	\$265.00	\$159.00
		Totals	\$61,541.00		\$84,780.00	\$23,239.00

Total Sticker and Bag Fees @ Current Rates =	\$248,329.00
Total Sticker and Bag Fees w/ Proposed Rate Increase =	\$313,465.00
Total Increase in Sticker & Bag Fee Revenue based on Proposed Fee Increase using FY20 Sticker & Bag Numbers =	\$65,136.00



# Massachusetts Department of Public Health COVID-19 Dashboard – Thursday, December 3, 2020

## Count and Rate of Confirmed COVID-19 Cases and Tests Performed in MA by City/Town, January 1, 2020 – December 1, 2020

City/Town	Total Case Count	Case Count (Last 14 Days)	Average Daily Incidence Rate per 100,000 (Last 14 days) <sup>1</sup>	Relative Change in Case Counts <sup>2</sup>	Total Tests	Total Tests (Last 14 days)	Total Positive Tests (Last 14 days)	Percent Positivity (Last 14 days)	Change in Percent Positivity <sup>3</sup>
Freetown	250	42	33.2	Lower	6042	765	48	6.27%	Higher
Gardner	484	132	47.4	Higher	18252	1729	141	8.16%	Higher
Georgetown	170	38	30.2	Higher	6453	854	41	4.80%	Higher
Gill	6	<5	12.8	Higher	2588	172	4	2.33%	Higher
Gloucester	555	85	21.4	Higher	20549	2525	106	4.20%	Higher
Goshen	10	<5	18.5	No Change	381	52	4	7.69%	Higher
Gosnold	5	0	0	No Change	111	0	0	0%	No Change
Grafton	307	87	30.9	Higher	17313	2282	95	4.16%	Higher
Granby	104	28	32.7	Higher	5340	695	29	4.17%	Higher
Granville	28	6	27.7	No Change	1039	141	7	4.96%	Lower
Great Barrington	104	16	17.0	Higher	12832	1430	17	1.19%	Higher
Greenfield	294	30	12.5	Higher	15401	1412	30	2.12%	Higher
Groton	138	54	33.0	Higher	11645	1416	55	3.88%	Higher
Groveland	106	24	25.0	Higher	4989	674	28	4.15%	Higher
Hadley	68	7	8.6	No Change	11615	1360	8	0.59%	Higher
Halifax	120	23	21.5	Higher	4664	473	24	5.07%	Higher
Hamilton	91	21	20.3	Higher	5549	812	26	3.20%	Higher

Data are current as of 11:59pm on 12/01/2020; For populations <50,000, <5 cases are reported as such or suppressed for confidentiality purposes. <sup>1</sup> For the calculations used to delineate Grey, Green, Yellow, and Red, please see table on page 24. <sup>2</sup>Number of new cases occurring over the current two-week period (11/15/2020 – 11/28/2020) compared to the previous two-week period (11/08/2020 – 11/21/2020). **Higher**=number of new cases in the current two-week period higher than the number of new cases during the last two-week period. **Lower**=number of new cases in the current two-week period lower than number of new cases during the last two-week period. **No change**=number of new cases in current two-week period is equal to the number of new cases during the last two-week period. <sup>3</sup>Change in percent positivity compared to the previous week's (11/27/2020) report. **No Change**= <0.10% difference in the percent positivity. DPH calculates rates per 100,000 population using denominators estimated by the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute using a modified Hamilton-Perry model (Strate S, et al. Small Area Population Estimates for 2011 through 2020, report, Oct 2016.) As of 11/5/2020, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health is using the 2019 population estimates, the most current available data. **Please note:** Data for these tables are based on information available in the DPH surveillance database at a single point in time. Case counts for specific cities and towns change throughout the day as data cleaning occurs (removal of duplicate reports within the system) and new demographic information (assigning cases to their city or town of residence) is obtained.

**Dawn Dunbar**

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**From:** Town of Groton <mchiasson@townofgroton.org>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 01, 2020 10:14 AM  
**To:** Select Board  
**Subject:** New Committee Interest Form Entry

**Name**

Richard Perini

**Phone Number**

781-777-3054

**Email**

[raperini@comcast.net](mailto:raperini@comcast.net)

**What Committee Are You Interested In Joining?**

Affordable Housing Trust

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

i want to help the Town of Groton in providing and maintaining affordable housing to our Groton households that need this valuable resource

Sent from [Town of Groton](#)



**EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN  
TOWN OF GROTON  
AND  
TOWN TREASURER/TAX COLLECTOR IN TRAINING**

This agreement is made this 7th day of December, to become effective upon ratification retro-active to November 30, by and between the Town of Groton, a municipal corporation in Middlesex County, Massachusetts, acting by its Select Board and Town Manager, hereinafter referred to as "the Board", "the Manager" or "the Town" and Hannah J. Moller of Ayer, Worcester County, Massachusetts, herein after referred to as "the Employee" or "Town Treasurer/Tax Collector In Training".

WHEREAS, the Town and the Employee desire to have an Employment Agreement in order to specifically express their responsibilities and mutual obligations as they relate to the position Town Treasurer/Tax Collector In Training;

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual covenants and agreements herein contained, the Town and the Employee agree as follows:

**I. AGREEMENT PERIOD**

- A. TERM: The Town agrees to employ the Employee as the Town Treasurer/Tax Collector In Training from December 1, 2021 through June 30, 2021.

**II. TERMINATION AND SEVERANCE PAY**

- A. The Town Manager may terminate the Town Treasurer/Tax Collector In Training for just cause during the term of this agreement.
- B. In the event the Town Treasurer/Tax Collector In Training is terminated by the Town prior to the expiration of the term of this agreement, the Town agrees that it shall pay the Town Treasurer/Tax Collector In Training a lump sum cash payment equal to two (2) weeks pay for each year or partial year of service to the Town, not to exceed three (3) months total severance pay, which amount shall be paid to the Town Treasurer/Tax Collector In Training on or before the effective date of termination of her employment; provided however that in the event the Town Treasurer/Tax Collector In Training is terminated for gross misconduct in office, the Town shall have no obligation to pay the aggregate severance sum provided in this contract.
- C. In the event the Town Treasurer/Tax Collector In Training voluntarily terminates her position with the Town before the expiration of the term of this Agreement, the Town Treasurer/Tax Collector In Training shall give the Town one (1) months written notice in advance, unless the parties agree otherwise. A copy of the resignation shall be filed with the Town Clerk.

### **III. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. **DUTIES:** The Town hereby agrees to employ the Employee as Town Treasurer/Tax Collector In Training, and the Employee agrees to serve the Town faithfully, diligently, and to the best of her ability, devoting full time attention thereto, and to perform all duties as described in the Town Treasurer/Tax Collector In Training Job Description specifically incorporated by reference as Appendix A.
- B. **OTHER EMPLOYMENT:** The Town Treasurer/Tax Collector In Training position is a full-time job. Other employment must be approved in writing by the Town Manager. If the Employee accepts employment without prior written approval, this employment agreement may be terminated immediately by the Town.
- C. **EXEMPT ACTIVITIES:** The above shall not be construed, however, to prevent the Employee from engaging in additional professional activities related to the position of Town Treasurer/Tax Collector in Training such as participation in professional societies and Board memberships provided that such participation does not interfere with the Employee's responsibilities as a Town Treasurer/Tax Collector In Training, as defined by the Town Manager.

### **IV. COMPENSATION**

Annual compensation shall be as follows:

- January 1, 2021 through June 30, 2021 - \$32.86 per hour of time worked.

The position is a waged position, and is non-exempt from all Federal and State laws pertaining to hours of employment and overtime.

### **V. BENEFITS**

- A. **VACATION.** Vacation benefit shall be as follows:  
  
Three (3) weeks, accrued on a monthly basis, with a maximum carryover of 30 days.
- B. **SICK LEAVE.** Sick leave shall be accrued at eight (8) hours per month.
- C. **HOLIDAY BENEFIT:** The Employee shall be entitled to eleven (11) Holidays, as listed below. All holidays shall be taken on the calendar day designated by the Town as the official day of the Holiday, unless otherwise authorized in advance by the Town Manager.

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Martin Luther King Day	Columbus Day
Presidents' Day	Veterans' Day
Patriots' Day	Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day	Christmas Day
Fourth of July	



- D. **HEALTH, LIFE & DISABILITY:** The Employee shall have access to the Town's group health, life, and disability insurance plans and shall contribute toward the premium for such insurance coverage as follows:

Health Insurance	30%
Basic Life Insurance	50%
Disability Coverage	100%

- E. The Employee shall be entitled to five (5) personal days per year.

## **VI. EXPENSES AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

- A. **TOWN TREASURER/TAX COLLECTOR IN TRAINING EXPENSES:** Subject to prior budget approval and appropriation, the Town agrees to pay all appropriate expenses incurred by the Employee in the performance of her duties as Town Treasurer/Tax Collector In Training.
- B. **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** Subject to prior budget approval and appropriation, the Town agrees to pay for the professional development activities of the Town Treasurer/Tax Collector In Training provided the activities may be reasonably expected to be of benefit to the Town of Groton. Such activities shall include: travel and meals for related meetings and conferences, provided that any such travel out of state or for more than two (2) days duration shall be subject to the approval of the Board; professional dues; continuing education/certification; and occasional subscriptions or publications in conjunction with the Massachusetts Municipal Accounting and Auditors Association and the Massachusetts Financial Officers Association.

## **VII. INDEMNIFICATION**

- A. The Town shall defend, save harmless and indemnify the Town Treasurer/Tax Collector In Training against any tort, professional liability, claim or demand, or other legal action, whether groundless or otherwise arising out of an alleged act or omission occurring the performance of her duties as Town Treasurer/Tax Collector In Training, even if such claim has been made following her termination from employment, provided that the Town Treasurer/Tax Collector In Training acted within the scope of her duties. To the extent allowed under MGL Ch. 256, the Town shall pay the amount of any settlement or judgment rendered thereon. The Town may compromise and settle any such claim or suit and will pay the amount of any settlement or judgment rendered thereon without recourse to the Town Treasurer/Tax Collector In Training.
- B. The Town shall reimburse the Town Treasurer/Tax Collector In Training for any attorneys' fees and costs incurred by the Town Treasurer/Tax Collector In Training in connection with such claims or suits involving the Town Treasurer/Tax Collector In Training in her professional capacity; except in the event of disciplinary action or associated hearings initiated by the Board or the Manager.
- B. This section shall survive the termination of this Agreement.



**IX. NO REDUCTION IN BENEFITS**

The Town shall not at any time during the term of the Agreement reduce the salary, compensation or other benefits of the Town Treasurer/Tax Collector In Training, except to the degree such a reduction is representative on average for all other employees of the Town.

**X. ENTIRE AGREEMENT AND SEVERABILITY**

- A. This instrument contains the entire Agreement between the Town and the Employee. The Agreement may be amended from time to time as mutually agreed upon by both parties in writing.
- B. If any one or more of the provisions of the Agreement shall be ruled to be invalid for any reason by a Court of Law in any jurisdiction, such ruling shall not affect the validity of the remaining provisions of this agreement.

WHEREFORE, the parties have caused this instrument to be signed and executed on the day first above written.

***TOWN TREASURER/TAX  
COLLECTOR IN TRAINING***

\_\_\_\_\_  
Hannah J. Moller

***SELECT BOARD***

\_\_\_\_\_  
Alison S. Manugian, Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Joshua A. Degen, Vice Chair

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John F. Reilly Jr., Clerk

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John R. Giger, Member

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Rebecca H. Pine, Member

***TOWN MANAGER***

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Mark W. Haddad

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
VIRTUAL MEETING  
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2020  
UN-APPROVED**

**SB Members Virtually Present:** Alison S. Manugian, Chair; Joshua A. Degen, Vice Chair; Rebecca H. Pine, Clerk; John R. Giger, Member; John F. Reilly, Member

**Also Virtually Present:** Mark W. Haddad, Town Manager; Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant; Melisa Doig, HR Director; Patricia Dufresne, Town Accountant; Michael Hartnett, Tax Collector/Treasurer; Hannah Moller, Assistant Tax Collector/Treasurer; Megan Foster, Assistant Assessor; Bud Robertson, Finance Committee Chair; Dr. Laura Chesson, School Superintendent; Marlena Gilbert, School Committee Chair

Ms. Manugian called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and reviewed the agenda.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Ms. Pine thanked everyone that played a part in delivering the delicious turkey dinners around to the seniors last Thursday as well as thanked Gibbet Hill for preparing the dinners. She added that this was in place of the annual Gibbet Hill Dinner.

Ms. Pine said that the emergency rental assistance program that was voted on at the October Town Meeting would begin next Monday, November 30<sup>th</sup>. She said that information would be available beginning next Monday on the Town's website.

**TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

1. Mr. Haddad said that they would continue to adhere to protocols as established for any COVID exposure as they did last week with the closure of Town Hall. Mr. Haddad said he also sent out an email over the weekend that only Vermont and Hawaii were non-restricted states. He asked people to be careful over the holiday week with travel.
2. Mr. Haddad said that Groton now had 16 cases within the last 14 days and was trending higher. He said that this made Groton a Green community adding he would continue to monitor this uptick in positive cases.
3. Mr. Haddad said that there was a letter in the Board's packet explaining the unfilled position in the Police Department. Chief Luth said that the second School Resource Officer (SRO) position was established in 2018 right after he arrived in Town as Chief. He said that this additional SRO had been very good and had a great relationship with the schools. He said that they needed to have the 20<sup>th</sup> position within their department filled otherwise it put them behind the eight ball and was a liability for them to not have a supervisor on for every shift.

Mr. Haddad said that they had budgeted \$122K for the Deputy's position. He said that the Deputy had retired in June and they had not filled that position. He said they instead promoted one of the Sergeants to Acting Lieutenant and paid him a stipend instead because of the hiring freeze. He said that the Chief would like to promote the Acting Lieutenant to Deputy, move an officer into the vacant Sergeants role and put the second SRO back in as a patrolman. He talked about the loss of funding of \$35K that they would see for the second SRO from Dunstable and Groton School.

**TAX CLASSIFICATION HEARING**

*Ms. Pine moved to reopen the public hearing on the tax classification hearing at 7:15pm. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. Roll Call: Manugian-aye; Pine-aye; Reilly-aye; Degen-aye; Giger-aye*

**TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT – cont.**

Ms. Pine asked what this meant for SRO coverage in the schools. Chief Luth said that with one SRO, the primary responsibility would be at the High School but that the SRO would be available to help in any of the other schools. Ms. Pine asked if Lawrence Academy and Groton School were receiving SRO coverage before the second SRO was added. Mr. Haddad said that they had. Ms. Pine asked if it was feasible for one SRO to cover all those needs. Chief Luth said that coverage would not be the same adding the single SRO would be where he was needed to be. Ms. Pine said she was torn and didn't want them to not fill this position in the future. Mr. Haddad said that they were not



reducing the roster adding it would stay a 20-person roster. He said that once the hiring freeze was up, they would look to refill that position. Ms. Pine asked if there was more Cares Act money and if it could fund this second SRO citing the necessity for this position within the schools during the pandemic. Mr. Haddad said that if they provided additional funding, he didn't know if they would be able to use Cares Act money to fund this but would have to check with the State. Ms. Dufresne said that there was no word on additional Cares Act funding on the horizon adding that their mental health funding request had been denied for use of Cares funding. Dr. Chesson said that she understood the reduction of an SRO as temporary and said she supported this because of the temporary nature of this position. She said that she understood that this would be funded in FY22 with the cut only being for the rest of the current FY year. Ms. Gilbert said that she had an issue cutting the SRO to fill a position within the Police Department. She said that they were talking a security personnel from the Schools and didn't think this conversation should be happening. She said she saw this as taking services away from the students. Mr. Reilly said that the SRO's were also interacting with the students even when they weren't in session. He said that the SRO's were good at the entire picture, 365 days a year and available during school and after school. Mr. Reilly asked Chief Luth if they were spending overtime to fill vacancies. Chief Luth said that 4 out of 6 nights, only 2 officers were covering which meant he had to fill the other 2 shifts using overtime. He added that training, vacations, etc. was down because of COVID therefore overtime was down as of right now.

Mr. Robertson said that this was a big issue which was going to be one of many with this budget. He said that they needed to make a list of priorities adding the priorities for the Schools and the Chief, in this instance, needed to be taken into consideration. He said that after the budget meetings, the Town Manager needed to prioritize budget items with discussions being had by the Finance Committee, Select Board and the School Committee. He said that they needed to look at all departments and take all departments into consideration. Ms. Manugian said she agreed and asked what detriment there was in waiting 6 weeks to look at it in the overall budget process. Mr. Haddad said that waiting did not have any impact. He said he needed to prioritize everything by December 31<sup>st</sup>. He said that the Police Department was in flux in terms of supervision and why it was added to the agenda. He said that he and the Chief wanted to bring it forward to discuss their thought process. Chief Luth said the supervision needed attention adding it was a liability for them to be down a supervisor. Mr. Degen said it would make more sense to decide on the supervisor position by January 15<sup>th</sup>. He asked if their patrol positions would suffer if they didn't fill that position. Mr. Haddad said that if they filled the deputy position, filled the supervisor position and left the patrol position unfilled, that would lead to overtime costs to fill that position and cautioned the Board of the overtime costs. He said that a potential savings of \$70K would be eaten up by about 70% in overtime costs. There was confusion whether cutting the second SRO would happen now or on July 1, 2021 and a brief discussion about that.

Mr. Giger said that making one of the SRO's part time in the schools and part time patrol would help some of this situation especially where the schools weren't attending fulltime. He said that this could help with the overnight shifts. He said that they needed to think about the support needed for the officers on the overnight shifts. Ms. Manugian said she was having a hard time talking about cutting and filling positions at this point in the year without knowing what funding looked like in the future.

#### **TAX CLASSIFICATION HEARING – Cont.**

Mr. Haddad said that the DOR had certified their values and was now waiting on the Board of Assessors to meet on this information. He asked if the Select Board wanted to wait until December 7<sup>th</sup> or hold a hearing next week so as to not hold up bills from going out. Ms. Foster said that the DOR was backed up because of COVID and municipality delays in getting information to them. Mr. Giger said that if they didn't know any more by next Monday, they couldn't make a decision. Ms. Foster said that because they were approved by the State earlier that day, the Assessors just needed time to put together their presentation. Mr. Haddad said he didn't see the Select Board approving anything but a single factor of 1 and asked if the Board could set then tax rate based on what they had thus far that night. Mr. Degen said he saw this as usurping the Board of Assessors adding he didn't need to hear the explanation but someone in the public might. Ms. Manugian asked if it was realistic for the Assessors to have their presentation done by next Monday. Ms. Foster said the Assessors would be ready for next week. Mr. Haddad asked the Board to continue to Monday, November 30<sup>th</sup> at 7:15pm.



*Ms. Pine made the motion. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. Roll Call: Pine-aye; Manugian-aye; Degen-aye; Reilly-aye; Giger-aye*

#### **TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT – CONT.**

4. Mr. Haddad said that he had provided the Board with an updated plan on the reorganization in the Tax Collector/Treasurer's office. He said that the revised plan would make Mr. Hartnett the Part Time Assistant TC/Treasurer, Ms. Moller would be the Full-Time Tax Collector/Treasurer, the Payroll Coordinator would remain the same at 35 hours and hire a part time, 15-hour a week clerk. He said that this would save them \$17,771.89 with the possibility of an additional \$18,500 savings in Mr. Hartnett's health insurance.

Ms. Manugian asked if leaving the 15-hour clerk unfilled would be a possibility. Mr. Haddad said that that would mean a decrease in office coverage but was something he would have to discuss with Ms. Moller and Mr. Hartnett. Ms. Manugian said that there may be reductions in availability depending on the budget issues they were facing. Mr. Hartnett said that Ms. Manugian's suggestion was a good one. He said he liked this new proposal adding Ms. Moller would get going right away. Mr. Degen said he liked Mr. Hartnett's pay staying the same and he liked looking at this yearly. Mr. Giger said that they shouldn't be making these decisions in small groups adding they needed to take this information consideration like the patrolman position. Ms. Manugian said she shared the same concerns and wasn't sure about adding a new position. Mr. Haddad said that they were adding a part time position in place of making one position part time. He said that a lot of thought had gone into this proposal and needed information like this in order to put together his proposal. He said that this proposal would make the budget for the office \$17K less than what it would be should Mr. Hartnett not plan to retire. Ms. Manugian said she could support the first 3 items but not the part time Clerk at this point. Mr. Degen said he disagreed with Mr. Giger in that he didn't view this as a small group discussion. He said that these ideas were being brought forward for discussion. He said he could support the first three pieces but not the part time clerk. He said he didn't want to see them choosing one department over another but needed to look at the big picture.

Mr. Haddad said he would like to get going on Ms. Moller's training immediately. He said he would have to figure out those 30 hours during the budget process. He said he would like to ensure that Ms. Moller and Mr. Hartnett of their positions come July 1, 2021.

*Mr. Degen made a motion to approve the plan as presented with the exception of the additional clerk position. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. Roll Call: Pine-aye; Degen-aye; Manugian-aye; Giger-aye; Reilly-aye*

5. Mr. Haddad said that they had completed the DPW construction project. He said that there was a warranty issue they were dealing with but wouldn't affect the budget. He said that they would be turning back about \$17k. He thanked those for helping to make this project a success. Mr. Giger said that the Building Committee wasn't mentioned and wanted to thank them for their volunteer time. Mr. Haddad apologized for not mentioning the Building Committee and thanked them for their time and involvement. Mr. Haddad said that proceeds could be used for any like project they could bond for; a project with a 20-year life expectancy.
6. Mr. Haddad said that the Prescott Sprinkler System was complete and was under budget by \$14k. He thanked everyone for their help on this project. Mr. Haddad said that the current fire alarm panel did not provide the Fire Department with a location of a potential fire which was a safety and code issue. He said that the quote to install this new fire panel was \$19K. He said that they had \$14K to put toward this. He said that the Friends of Prescott voted unanimously to cover the additional \$6K cost to cover the installation of the fire panel. Mr. Degen said that the use of the top floor could not be utilized until the fire panel was installed and was important to add to the discussion. Mr. Giger asked if Town funds were still going to be used. Mr. Haddad said that the funding for the fire panel would come from the surplus in the sprinkler system project and from the Friends of Prescott. He said there would be no additional town funds used.

7. Mr. Haddad said that the Finance Committee had met to review the financial policies. He said that the investment section was updated to coincide with the recent town meeting vote on investments. He said that no other changes were being recommended by the Finance Committee and suggested that the Board adopt the policy. Ms. Pine said she saw one other item she was recommending a change on. She said that the section on ethics should also include a statement that any written disclosure should be provided to the Town Clerk in addition to the Town Manager. Mr. Haddad said that this was a good change and supported this.

Mr. Haddad asked the Board to make a motion to approve and adopt the financial policy as amended that evening. Mr. Robertson said that this did not need to go back to the Finance Committee adding the changes were not substantive.

*Ms. Pine made the motion. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. Roll Call: Pine-aye; Manugian-aye; Degen-aye; Reilly-aye; Giger-aye*

8. Mr. Haddad provided the Board with an update on their schedule for the next few weeks. He said he would advertise a public hearing for December 14<sup>th</sup> for a liquor license fee waiver discussion. Mr. Giger said that they could make an exception to their policy. Ms. Manugian said that they could reduce the fees for the current calendar year and increase it again the following year.

#### **ON-GOING ISSUES**

Mr. Haddad said he was going to take off the highway garage project off the list.

#### **LIAISON REPORTS**

Ms. Pine said that the Housing Production Plan was available on the Town's website. She said she had received calls about other properties they should be looking at for affordable housing and appreciated those calls.

#### **MINUTES**

*Ms. Pine made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of November 16, 2020. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. Roll Call: Pine-aye; Degen-aye; Manugian-aye; Giger-aye; Reilly-aye*

Ms. Manugian adjourned the meeting at 8:37pm.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rebecca H. Pine, Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_ respectfully submitted:  
Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant

Date Approved:



**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
VIRTUAL MEETING  
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2020  
UN-APPROVED**

**SB Members Virtually Present:** Alison S. Manugian, Chair; Joshua A. Degen, Vice Chair; Rebecca H. Pine, Clerk; John R. Giger, Member; John F. Reilly, Member

**Also Virtually Present:** Mark W. Haddad, Town Manager; Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant; Melisa Doig, HR Director; Patricia Dufresne, Town Accountant; Michael Hartnett, Tax Collector/Treasurer; Hannah Moller, Assistant Tax Collector/Treasurer; Megan Foster, Assistant Assessor; Board of Assessors Members Don Black, Garrett Boles, Jenifer Evans

Ms. Manugian called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and reviewed the agenda.

Mr. Boles called the Board of Assessors to order at 7:01pm

**TAX CLASSIFICATION HEARING**

*Ms. Pine moved to reopen the public hearing on the tax classification hearing. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. Roll Call: Manugian-aye; Pine-aye; Reilly-aye; Degen-aye; Giger-aye*

Mr. Boles explained briefly Prop 2 ½ and what the levy limit was for FY2021. He said that with a single tax rate and a levy share without classification, the estimated tax rate was \$17.60. Mr. Boles said that for every one cent of residential shift, the amount shifted to commercial would go up by 40 cents. He said that Groton historically had not classified their tax rate because of the burden it would put on the small commercial tax base Groton had. Mr. Boles suggested that they leave the tax rate as a factor of 1. He said that the small commercial tax base had enough of a burden on them right now because of COVID. Mr. Haddad said that he would recommend that the Board set a single tax rate and set the tax rate as a residential factor of 1 as soon as they closed their public hearing.

*Mr. Degen moved to close the public hearing. Ms. Pine seconded the motion.*

Ms. Evans thanked Mr. Greeno and Ms. Foster for all their hard work adding they had a solid team.

*Roll Call: Pine-aye; Degen-aye; Manugian-aye; Giger-aye; Reilly-aye*

*Mr. Degen moved to adopt a residential factor of one, single tax rate of \$17.60 for current fiscal year. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. Roll Call: Pine-aye; Degen-aye; Manugian-aye; Giger-aye; Reilly-aye*

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Haddad asked the Board if they would be willing to extend the signing authority of the warrants for the Town Manager and one member of the Board through January 3, 2021. Mr. Reilly said he had no problem volunteering to do this.

*Mr. Degen moved to designate John Reilly and the Town Manager to sign all warrants through January 3, 2021. Roll Call: Pine-aye; Degen-aye; Manugian-aye; Giger-aye; Reilly-abstain*

Mr. Haddad said that the cell tower on Cow Pond Brook Road had been in existence since 2004. He said that the lease company had reached out to them to extend the current lease. Ms. Dunbar said that they received a monthly rent payment of \$3,200 and a monthly revenue profit share of \$999. Mr. Giger said that in section 12 of the base lease it said that the lessee was supposed to post a bond. Mr. Haddad said he would have to double check who was holding that and get back to them. Mr. Giger asked that the bond amount be reviewed also. Mr. Degen said that he would also like to find out if they were being paid for additional carriers on the tower adding that they were originally only receiving payment for one carrier. Mr. Degen asked for a full accounting before they voted on any agreement. There was a brief discussion on the timeline of this current lease and new proposed lease to clear up some confusion.



Ms. Pine said that the emergency rental assistance program went live that day adding information could be found on the Town's website.

Ms. Manugian adjourned the meeting at 7:41pm.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rebecca H. Pine, Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_ respectfully *submitted*:  
Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant

Date Approved: