

# Select Board Meeting Packet

January 11, 2021

*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 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*

**Town Manager**  
Mark W. Haddad

**SELECT BOARD MEETING  
MONDAY, JANUARY 11, 2021  
AGENDA**

**VIRTUAL MEETING  
BROADCAST ON ZOOM AND THE GROTON CHANNEL  
PURSUANT TO GOVERNOR'S EXECUTIVE ORDER  
CONCERNING THE OPEN MEETING LAW  
ZOOM MEETING ID: 829 6433 3205**

**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**

1. Select Board's Agenda Schedule
2. Address Any Changes in Emergency Protocols – Update on Town Action
3. Review Any New Information from the Commonwealth
4. Consider Ratifying the Town Manager's Appointment of Benjamin Zimmer as Stormwater Technician I
5. Consider Approving Proposed Liquor License Fee Adjustment Policy
6. Consider Approving Proposed CPA Application for a New Middle School Track
7. Discussion – Determine Process/Criteria for Issuing Letters of Support for Various CPA Proposed Projects
8. Open the Warrant and Call for the 2021 Spring Town Meeting
9. Update from Town Manager on FY 2022 Budget Development
10. Update on Select Board Schedule through Town Meeting

**II. 7:15 P.M. In Joint Session with the Finance Committee - Presentation of the Town Manager's Proposed Fiscal Year 2022 Operating Budget**

### 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 December 21, 2020**

### ADJOURNMENT

**Notes 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:** *January 11, 2021*

1. In addition to the Town Manager's Report and a review of the On-going Issues List, there is one item scheduled on the Agenda. The Select Board will be meeting in joint session with the Finance Committee for the presentation of the Town Manager's Proposed FY 2022 Operating Budget.
2. Due to Governor Baker's decision to extend the temporary limits in capacity for various businesses and activities through January 24, 2021, we have extended working remotely at the Town Hall and Library through 6:00 a.m. on Monday, January 25, 2021. I will provide the Board with an update at Monday's meeting.
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 January 7, 2021. We continue to be a "yellow" community with 45 reported cases in the last two weeks with a 4.93% positivity rate. We are trending higher and dangerously close to becoming a "red" community. We will continue to be diligent in our efforts to address the impact this pandemic has on our operations. I will have a further update for the Board at Monday's meeting.
4. We have completed our search to fill the new Stormwater Technician 1 position for the Stormwater Utility. DPW Director Tom Delaney is recommending that I appoint Benjamin Zimmer to the position. Ben has worked for the Town's Highway/DPW since 2001 and has been an exemplary employee. He is the right person for this position. I would respectfully request that the Board consider ratifying this appointment at Monday's meeting. Further, I would respectfully request that the Board lift the hiring freeze and allow me to fill the vacancy this appointment will create in the Highway Department. Transferring Ben to the Stormwater Utility will put the DPW down two (2) employees and it would be extremely difficult to operate the Department. I do appreciate the Board's consideration of both of these requests.
5. As requested by the Board, I have drafted the Liquor License Fee Adjustment Policy as discussed by the Board last December. Town Counsel has reviewed and commented on the policy and it is in its final form and ready for adoption by the Board. Enclosed with this report is the Policy. I would respectfully request that the Board adopt this policy at Monday's meeting.

**Select Board  
Weekly Report  
January 11, 2021  
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6. As directed by the Select Board, and in conjunction with representatives from the Groton Dunstable Regional School District, I have drafted a Community Preservation application for a new Middle School Track. I had provided this application (36 pages) to the Board under separate cover last week and asked for feedback. Having received none from any Board member, I believe the application is ready for approval and submittal to the Community Preservation Committee. For the Board's information, this application has been approved by the Groton Dunstable Regional School District Committee. I would respectfully request that the Board approve this application at Monday's meeting.
7. While we are on the subject of the Community Preservation Act, the Board is starting to get requests for letters of recommendations for the various applications. In speaking with several members of the Board, it appears that the Board should develop a process in which to review the application and determine whether or not you will issue the requested letter. I would like to spend a few minutes at Monday's meeting discussing this with the Board.
8. It is that time of year for the Board to call for and open the Warrant for the 2021 Spring Town Meeting. Given the fact that the State is slowly rolling out the COVID-19 vaccinations, I would recommend that we hold the Town Meeting outdoors at the Middle School Track. To that end, I would propose that the Select Board call for the Spring Town Meeting to be held on Saturday, May 1, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. at the Middle School Track. I have cleared this date with the Town Moderator. This would push the Annual Election back one week to Tuesday, May 25, 2021. I have cleared that date with the Town Clerk. Enclosed with this report is the proposed schedule. I would respectfully request that the Board vote to call for the meeting and open the Warrant at Monday's meeting. The Warrant would close on Friday, February 26<sup>th</sup>. We can discuss this in more detail at Monday's meeting.
9. Given the fact that I am presenting the Budget at Monday's meeting, I do not have another update for the Board on the Proposed Fiscal Year 2022 Operating Budget, other than the Finance Committee is considering either Saturday, January 23<sup>rd</sup> or Saturday, January 30<sup>th</sup> for their Budget Hearing. We can discuss this with the FinCom at Monday's meeting. Please note that the meeting will be held on Zoom.
10. I would propose the following meeting schedule for the Board that will take you through the Spring Town Meeting. Due to my personal circumstances, I have not had the chance to review this with the Chair, but will update the schedule based on your review and a more detailed discussion with the Chair.

Monday, January 11, 2021	-Already Posted
Monday, January 18, 2021	-No Meeting (Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday)
Monday, January 25, 2021	-Presentation from the Diversity Task Force
Monday, February 1, 2021	-FY 2022 Budget Review/Update

**Continued on Next Page – Over >**

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10. Continued:

Monday, February 8, 2021	-Review FY 2021 Second Quarter Financials -Review/Update Annual Goals
Monday, February 15, 2021	-No Meeting (Presidents Day Holiday)
Monday, February 22, 2021	-Review Existing Committees -Continue Discussion on CPA Participation/Level
Monday, March 1, 2021	-Review/Approve Update to Traffic Rules and Orders -Update from Town Manager on Long Term Disability
Monday, March 8, 2021	-Review Trainings Offered to Town Employees
Monday, March 15, 2021	-Public Hearing on the Warrant for Spring Town Meeting
Monday, March 22, 2021	-Follow-Up on Warrant Articles Public Hearing -Finalize FY 2022 Proposed Operating Budget
Monday, March 29, 2021	-Regularly Scheduled Meeting (Potential No Meeting)
Monday, April 5, 2021	-Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, April 12, 2021	-Finalize Warrant for Spring Town Meeting
Monday, April 19, 2021	-No Meeting – (Patriot’s Day Holiday)
Monday, April 26, 2021	-Final Spring Town Meeting Prep
Saturday, May 1, 2021	2021 Spring Town Meeting

MWH/rjb  
enclosures



Massachusetts Department of Public Health COVID-19 Dashboard – Thursday, January 7, 2021

Count and Rate of Confirmed COVID-19 Cases and Tests Performed in MA by City/Town, January 1, 2020 – January 5, 2021

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	526	105	82.9	Lower	8889	814	116	14.25%	Higher
Gardner	1264	321	115.4	Higher	24352	1939	348	17.95%	Higher
Georgetown	307	54	42.9	Higher	8859	874	62	7.09%	Higher
Gill	18	<5	8.5	Lower	2933	90	3	3.33%	Higher
Gloucester	1014	164	41.2	Higher	28817	2863	178	6.22%	Higher
Goshen	13	0	0	No Change	508	45	0	0%	No Change
Gosnold	5	0	0	No Change	115	3	0	0%	No Change
Grafton	606	86	30.5	Lower	23350	2077	108	5.20%	Lower
Granby	187	38	44.4	Higher	7024	617	42	6.81%	No Change
Granville	52	10	46.1	Higher	1349	109	11	10.09%	Higher
Great Barrington	183	30	31.9	Higher	16007	1325	30	2.26%	Higher
Greenfield	527	54	22.5	Lower	21371	1873	61	3.26%	Higher
Groton	252	40	24.4	Higher	14522	912	45	4.93%	Higher
Groveland	280	74	77.2	Higher	6930	665	81	12.18%	Higher
Hadley	163	44	54.2	Lower	14247	931	56	6.02%	Higher
Halifax	273	57	53.3	Higher	6577	631	63	9.98%	Higher
Hamilton	175	34	32.9	Higher	8742	1381	36	2.61%	Higher

Data are current as of 11:59pm on 01/05/2021; 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 (12/20/2020 – 01/02/2021) compared to the previous two-week period (12/13/2020 – 12/26/2020). **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 (12/31/2020) 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.



# SELECT BOARD POLICY

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Policy Category:	Board
Policy Number:	BOA – 2021 – 1
Latest Revision Date:	January 11, 2021

## POLICY NAME: LIQUOR LICENSE FEE ADJUSTMENT POLICY

### I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to provide relief to holders of All Alcoholic on Premise Liquor Licenses in the Town of Groton due to the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic during Calendar Year 2021.

### II. POLICY

- A. The time period that this policy is in effect is from January 1, 2021 through November 30, 2021 or while the COVID-19 Pandemic State of Emergency, as declared by Governor Charles Baker, is in effect, whichever ends earlier.
- B. In an effort to provide relief to businesses in Town that have paid for an All Alcoholic on Premise Liquor License for Calendar Year 2021, the Select Board shall grant a fee reduction based on the following:
  1. During Calendar Year 2021, should any business holding said license, not be able to sell/serve alcohol due to the COVID-19 Pandemic for an entire calendar month, said business shall be able to apply for a \$250 per month reduction on the Calendar Year 2022 Liquor License Fee. Requests for terms other than what's stated herein, will not be entertained.
  2. Proof of closure shall be submitted to the Select Board when seeking the fee reduction. Proof shall include, but not be limited to, notice of closure of the business, sales records, a notarized affidavit of the owner confirming the closure/lack of sales, and the most up to date contact information for the responsible party(ies) to include home address, cell phone number and personal email address.

## 11. CPA PROJECT APPLICATION FORM

[CPC Use Only: Date Received \_\_\_\_\_ By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Assigned CPC #2022- \_\_\_\_\_ ]

If possible, use word processor to fill out form. Please answer all questions, use "N/A" if not applicable.

1. a.) Applicant Name and Organization: Last Haddad, Mark First \_\_\_\_\_  
Organization(s) (if appropriate) Groton Select Board and Groton Dunstable Regional School Committee
- b.) Regional Project: Yes ? or No?  If Yes, Town/Organization: Select Board/GDRSD Committee
2. Submission Date: 1/14/21
3. Applicant Address: St. 173 Main Street  
City/ State: Groton, MA ZIP: 1450
4. Ph. # 978-448-1111 Email: mhaddad@grotonma.gov
5. CPA Purpose. Check all that apply:  
Community Housing  (Affordable Housing ) Historic Preservation\*  Open Space:   
Recreation
- \* As per MA General Law Chapter 44B, proposed historic projects that are not on the structures listed on the state's registry of historic places require a determination by the Groton Historic Commission that the proposed project is of historic significance.*
6. Town Committee or boards participating: Select Board and GDRSD Committee
7. Project Location/Address: 342/344 Main Street Groton, MA 01450
8. Project Name: Middle School Track Construction
9. Additional Responsible Parties (If applicable):

Role (specify)	Name	Address	Ph. (w) (cell)	Email
Property/Site Owner	Town of Groton	173 Main Street	978-448-1111	mhaddad@grotonma.gov
Project Manager	Mark Haddad	Same		
Lead Architect		179 Boylston St # P	617-524-5555	info@studiogroton.com
Project Contractor	TBD			
Project Consultants	Left Field	25 Franklin St, 26th	(617) 737 64	information@leftfield.com
Other:				
Other				

10. As appropriate, indicate if proposal requires P&S agreement  Deed   
Option agreement  Other-describe: \_\_\_\_\_
11. a.) Assessor info. (map/ block/ lot id.(s)): 110/42 b.) Tax classification type: R-A
12. Permits required: Zoning: \_\_\_\_\_ Historic Preservation: \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
13. Historic Commission Approval signoff (when required): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_
14. Funding: a.) Project Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Estimate: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Professional Quote: \$ 1,405,374  
b.) Requested from CPC: \$ \$ 1,405,374.00 c.) Committed from other sources: \$ \$ 0.00  
d.) Annual anticipated total income: \$ \$ 0.00 e.) Annual anticipated total expense: \$ \$ 0.00  
f.) Anticipated net income (loss): \$ \_\_\_\_\_ g.) Estimator name/company: PM&C
15. CCP Objectives - use codes from **Section 5** to indicate all that apply: OSRP 9.5.3
16. Project Timelines: Proposed Start Date: 7/1/21 Projected Complete Date: 6/30/23
17. Estimated Delivery Date of Completion Report to CPC: 6/30/23

18. Project description and explanation (attach additional sheets as needed): See attached project description and explanation.

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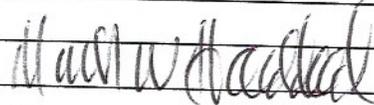
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19. Feasibility: Since the land is owned by the Town/District and the Select Board and School Committee are in support of the project, once funding is approved, the project will commence unfettered.

20. List of attachments: 1. Project Estimate. 2. Minutes from Florence Roche Building Committee. 3. Community Letters of Support. 4. Potential Bonding Scenarios.

21. Additional Information: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

22. Management Plan: The Town Manager, as Chief Procurement Officer, and in conjunction with the Owner's Project Manager for the Florence Roche Construction and Studio G Architects, will design and bid the project. The OPM, as Clerk of the Works for the Florence Roche Construction Project, will oversee the construction and compliance with the plans. The Town Manager and School Superintendent will be responsible for approval of all invoices relative to this project.

23. Applicant Signature:  Date: 1-4-21  
Co Applicant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Co Applicant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Groton Community Preservation Application Project Description and Explanation**

### **Middle School Track Construction**

The Groton Dunstable Regional School District Committee and Groton Select Board are jointly submitting this project application. On October 28, 2020, the School District's Business Manager submitted a CPA Project Summary entitled "Groton Dunstable Natural Field Restoration". This project was submitted in an effort to restore various fields owned by the District to safe and usable conditions for both students and the community in general. While the District will still be submitting an overall project application, the GDRSD Committee, Select Board and Florence Roche Building Committee are providing this application as a supplement to the original application.

### **History/Background**

Two years ago, the Groton Dunstable Regional School District (GDRSD) Committee submitted an application to the Massachusetts School Building Assistance Program (MSBA) for funding to renovate and/or reconstruct the Florence Roche Elementary School. The Florence Roche Elementary School is over 50 years old and in need of a major overhaul. The School is owned by the Town of Groton and leased to the School District. There is strong support of the project by the Groton Select Board and GDRSD Committee. The MSBA has given preliminary approval for the project and will provide reimbursement to the Town of up to 49% of eligible project costs. The Town of Groton will bond the project on behalf of the District and the Town Manager and School Superintendent will be responsible for project oversight, along with the Florence Roche Elementary School Building Committee that was appointed by the GDRSD Committee to oversee and develop the project on behalf of the Town and District.

The Building Committee has hired an Owner's Project Manager (Left Field) and Architect (Studio G Architects) to design the project with the Committee's approval. As part of the design process, the Committee needed to determine whether to renovate or reconstruct the Elementary School. After a thorough examination of the current building and the anticipated renovation costs, the Building Committee determined that it was in the best interest of the Town/District, both financially

and in the long-term interest of the District, to build a brand new school and demolish the current building. Once this decision was made, the Committee needed to determine the best location for the new School. An exhaustive site study was conducted and it was determined that the best location for the new School would be on the site of the current Middle School Track. This site was best suited for a new School and was the most cost-effective solution.

Once this site was selected, the Building Committee needed to determine whether or not the track would be replaced. The Committee was informed that the current track was not a regulation track and the School District could develop reasonable alternatives to provide the same kind of activities currently taking place on the Middle School Track. Based on this, the Committee voted not to replace the Track. Since that vote, the Committee was informed that the Track was indeed a regulation track and losing it would be extremely detrimental to the District and the Community in general.

### **Project Request for Funding**

The Building Committee conducted two meetings to discuss whether or not to reconsider its decision not to replace the Track (see attached minutes). At these meetings, over 60 people attended each session to express their desire that the Track be reconstructed. After the first meeting, the Committee voted unanimously to include the Track in the Florence Roche Elementary School Construction Project and directed the OPM and Architect to develop plans and cost estimates for a new Track. The Architect developed plans for the Track and the OPM hired PM&C to develop a construction estimate. The estimate (attached) came in at \$1,405,374. In addition, the OPM determined that the new Track would not be eligible for reimbursement under the MSBA Program as the Project had already reached its maximum reimbursement for Site costs. The Town would be responsible for the entire construction cost.

At the second Building Committee meeting where this was discussed, the Committee voted again to support the new Track and voted to direct GDRSD Committee Chair Marlena Gilbert and Town Manager Mark Haddad to determine if applying for Community Preservation Funds to pay for the Track was a reasonable alternative. Since the School Committee had filed a preliminary project application for Field Restoration, it was determined that this application could be submitted to

the Community Preservation Committee for consideration. Since the Track Reconstruction is not eligible for State support under the MSBA program, the Committees believe that CPA funds provide state reimbursement in keeping with the overall intent of the project. It is the understanding of the Committee that the Town of Groton received 41% in CPA Matching Funds in Fiscal Year 2021. If this carries through over the next several years, this Track would be supported by State funding as well (up to \$576,000 of the overall project cost).

### **Support for this Application**

At the December 21, 2020 meeting of the Groton Select Board, the Board voted to submit this application. At the January 6, 2021 meeting of the Groton Dunstable Regional School District Committee, the Committee voted to submit this application. The Select Board has received a petition signed by over fifty (50) residents (copy attached) in support of this Project Application. In addition, various community groups, including the Groton Dunstable Boosters, Groton Road Race, Pack 12 Cub Scouts, Groton Council of Aging and Groton-Dunstable Special Education Parent Advisory Council have expressed support and are planning on submitting letters to the Community Preservation Committee in support of this application.

### **Financing the Project**

Due to the fact that the funding request is in excess of any one-year ability of the CPA to fund the project, we are including on our application various bonding scenarios for your consideration. Attached to this Summary are bond payment schedules for 5, 7, 10 and 15 years to assist you in determining the best way to fund/approve this worthy application.

On behalf of the Groton Select Board and Groton Dunstable Regional School District Committee, I appreciate your consideration of this request

Mark W. Haddad  
Town Manager



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**Town Manager**  
Mark W. Haddad

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

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

**Subject:** *Spring Town Meeting – May 1, 2021*

**Date:** *January 12, 2021*

Please be advised that at the regularly scheduled meeting of the Select Board held on Monday, January 11, 2021, the Board voted to open the Warrant for the 2021 Spring Town Meeting. Please note that the Town Meeting will be held on the first Saturday in May, beginning at 10:00 a.m. outdoors at the Middle School Track behind the Florence Roche Elementary School. The Warrant will close at the close of business on Friday, February 26, 2021.

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

Tuesday, January 12, 2021 -	Warrant for 2021 Spring Town Meeting Opens
Friday, February 26, 2021 -	Warrant for 2021 Spring Town Meeting Closes
Monday, March 1, 2021 -	Select Board conduct first review of Articles
Monday, March 15, 2021 -	SB – FINCOM Public Hearing on Articles
Monday, April 12, 2021 -	Select Board Finalize Warrant
Friday, April 16, 2021 -	Post Warrant
Saturday, May 1, 2021 -	Spring Town Meeting

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

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

MWH/rjb

cc: Select Board  
Finance Committee  
Michael Bouchard – Town Clerk  
Jason Kauppi – Town Moderator  
Paul DeRensis – Town Counsel

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
VIRTUAL MEETING  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 21, 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; Marlena Gilbert, School Committee Chair; Don Black; Officer Bob Breault; Police Chief Luth; Sergeant Ed Sheridan;

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

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mr. Giger reminded the public about the Fire Department's Santa ride on Christmas Eve adding the schedule and maps were listed online.

**TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

1. Mr. Haddad said that the Town Hall, Senior Center and Library had been closed to the public with employees working remotely until January 4th. He said that should something change; he would get ahold of the Board to hold an emergency meeting.
2. Mr. Haddad said that Groton was still a yellow community and went down to 49 cases over a 2-week period. He said that they would continue to be diligent but that this was some positive news. He asked people to do their best to adhere to the guidelines and protocols. Ms. Pine said that all surrounding towns were red with the exception of Dunstable.
3. Mr. Haddad said he had completed the search for Principal Assistant Assessor. He said that the interview team interviewed 4 applicants. Mr. Haddad said that the team unanimously decided that although qualifications were important, it wasn't always the only thing they looked at. He said that the best person to serve in the role was Megan Foster. He said that all 3 elected Assessors recommended in writing to him that they wanted Ms. Foster in that position. He said that Ms. Foster came in with a 30-60-90-day plan, that Ms. Foster was an active participant on the Finance Team and Ms. Foster had shown that she wanted the job. He said that he was recommending Ms. Foster for the job and would like to give her a 6-month contract and negotiate with her after that time to get her contract in line with the other contract employees. Mr. Reilly said that Ms. Foster slammed the interview and really rose to the top. Mr. Robertson said that there were 2 candidates that were really qualified but had the right personality. Mr. Degen asked if he had the opportunity to negotiate a contract with her for the 6-month time. Ms. Foster said they had and she was happy with it.

*Mr. Degen moved to affirm the appointment of Megan Foster as Principal Assistant Assessor with a probationary term to expire June 30, 2021. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. Roll Call: Pine-aye; Degen-aye; Manugian-aye; Reilly-aye; Giger-aye*

4. Mr. Haddad said that Police Chief Michael Luth attended their November 23rd meeting to discuss staffing within the Police Department given the fact that we are not filling a Patrol Officer vacancy. He said that at that time, they discussed the potential of eliminating one of the two School Resource Officer positions and returning it to patrol to ensure proper coverage. He said that the Select Board was not comfortable with this move and asked that they further review the manning issue and come back with a new recommendation. Mr. Haddad said that in addition, the issue of supervision was also raised. He said that with the vacancy of the Deputy Chief, Sergeant Ed Sheridan had been serving as Acting Lieutenant to provide necessary management coverage. Mr. Haddad said that this had caused a supervision gap on some of their shifts without having the Sergeant position serving in a patrol capacity. Mr. Haddad said that he and Chief Luth had had several meetings and conversations on this and had determined that, for

the short-term, they would keep the two school resource officers and fill all patrol shifts with overtime, when necessary. Mr. Haddad said that also due to the need for proper supervision, the Chief had recommended, and he fully agreed and supported, permanently filling the Deputy Chiefs position and then promoting a patrol officer to Sergeant. With all the scrutiny facing Police Departments at this time, he said that proper supervision was crucial.

Chief Luth said that he would be willing to keep the second SRO for the next year but would have to reevaluate this in the future. He said that they would do everything they could to make this work. Mr. Haddad said they were not filling that officer position, but that it was a top priority for them to fill should they find money. Mr. Giger said he had an issue with using OT to fill that shift. He said that this would burn out the organization. He said that he would like to see a mandatory review of this halfway through the year. Mr. Degen said he would like to see the Town Manager fund the position for next year but not fill it. Mr. Haddad said that the position was still on the roster but no money allocated to it. He said he would like to continue on and see what 6 months to a year looked like. Mr. Degen asked what the overtime budget was for the Police Department. He said he had huge concerns about the bleed rate on the overtime budget. Mr. Haddad said that the overtime budget was \$502,307 which covered vacations, sick leave, etc. Mr. Haddad said that the money allocated for shift coverage for unplanned events would cover most of the overtime that they were talking about. Chief Luth said that the other categories of overtime were pretty solid numbers (for covering vacation time, sick time, etc.). Mr. Robertson said they should leave it and see if they make it. Mr. Degen said he saw this as deficit spending by using overtime budget to cover this unfilled shift. Mr. Haddad said that this was something they could reevaluate as they go along. Mr. Degen said they needed to step up their planning for Indian Hill coming online as they would be opening at the end of the next fiscal year.

Ms. Manugian said they were being asked to change some positions for supervisory roles and an unfilled position and whether or not it should be filled or overtime used, etc. Mr. Haddad said that the key to this was supervision now which was crucial. Mr. Giger thought they were only putting a band aid on this problem and wasn't going to heal alone. He said he wanted to see this remain a high priority. Mr. Degen said he had no problem with elevating Sergeant Sheridan and Officer Breault.

5. Mr. Haddad said that based on the recommendations of the Chief he wholeheartedly supported promoting Acting Lieutenant Sheridan to Deputy Chief. Mr. Haddad asked the Board to ratify his appointment.

*Mr. Degen moved to ratify the appointment of Ed Sheridan effective today to Deputy Chief. Ms. Pine seconded the motion.*

Chief Luth said that Ed Sheridan had his utmost confidence that he could run the department if he was unable to. He said that Ed Sheridan understood the community and couldn't endorse this more.

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

6. Mr. Haddad said he had the fortune of appointing Bob Breault as officer 11 years ago. Mr. Haddad said that the Chief did a competitive search and testing for the promotion and agreed with the Chief's recommendation of Bob Breault as Sergeant. Mr. Haddad asked the Board to ratify his appointment.

*Mr. Reilly made a motion to ratify the Town Manager's appointment of Bob Breault as Sergeant within the Groton Police Department. Ms. Pine seconded the motion.*

Mr. Giger said that he had met Officer Breault when he was on the School Committee and thought he had done a great job and thought he would do a great job as Sergeant.

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

Mr. Degen said that any money not spent within a line item in a budget would become free cash. Mr. Degen said they needed to fund positions but was concerned using overtime dollars to infill shifts and backfill shifts where they

didn't have the coverage required. Mr. Degen said he didn't see a scenario why they didn't fund this. Mr. Haddad agreed.

### **MIDDLE SCHOOL TRACK – CPA APPLICATION**

Ms. Gilbert said that when it came to the Florence Roche Project and Track that this was a Groton project and not a district project. She said that the School Committee had some tasks with this project; they had to get into the MSBA program, get the building committee established, and hire the OPM and Architect. She said that they had an \$80M project which also included a \$1.4M track. She said it was part of the project and not an add on. She said that they had an opportunity to apply for CPA funds should the CPC approve it for Town Meeting vote. Ms. Gilbert said they had a CPA application into the CPC already for the Middle School field restoration. She said that the School Committee was passing the baton as this was a Groton project but that she would still assist as a collaborative board member.

Ms. Manugian said there were a lot of pieces to this. Mr. Degen said that the track not only benefited Groton but Dunstable too as Dunstable students utilized it. Ms. Gilbert said that the reason it would end up behind the Middle School is because they wanted to build the new school on top of the track. Mr. Giger said that if they fund the track, and Dunstable had no obligation to help with that, the Dunstable students would be denied use of the track. Ms. Manugian said that they were going to be destroying the track to build a new school and because of that, it was on them to provide the same level of service or opportunity of a track. Ms. Manugian said that the information they had said it was not a regulation track and didn't need to be rebuilt but that the track was in fact a regulation track and needed to be rebuilt. Ms. Gilbert said that there was talk about bussing the students to the high school track which would be inconvenient, and costly. She said that they had a huge attendance at their last Building Committee meeting by members of the community of all ages who wanted to see the track rebuilt. Mr. Haddad said that the Building Committee voted to include the money in the project that went before the MSBA. Mr. Haddad said that Ms. Gilbert was telling them they had the ability to lower the amount of the school project by applying for CPA funds. Mr. Giger asked who would be responsible for the maintenance of it. Mr. Haddad said that the district would. Mr. Giger asked about the money raised by an organization to place artificial turf at the high school. He asked if someone looked into reaching out to those folks about utilizing some of those funds. Ms. Gilbert said that GD@Play had collected \$105K. She said that there were some pledges made that remain unsecured and could possibly agree to donate toward a natural turf field instead of an artificial turf field.

Ms. Pine asked who owned the property. Mr. Haddad said that the Town owned the Florence Roche property, the track and part of the parking lot. He said the district owned the rest. Ms. Pine said that they were going to improve the field behind the middle school and wouldn't hurt to ask Dunstable if they would be interested in participating in an application. Ms. Manugian said that part of the answer wasn't clear at this point. Ms. Gilbert said that the MSBA saw this as a Groton project and wasn't sure how they would see incorporating another Town at this point. Ms. Gilbert said that this project should be done in a collaborative manner but that she wasn't asking the Board to take on this project. Ms. Pine said that there were a lot of ways this project was murky. Ms. Gilbert said that the School Committee made the decision to bring the students back to Groton under the knowledge that this was a home town elementary school and something that was favored by the MSBA. Mr. Degen asked how much money sat in open space and recreation fund currently for the CPA. Mr. Degen said he would not support a CPA proposal and would not tie the taxpayers into a 3% surcharge for the future. Ms. Manugian said it would take 3 years to fund this and not long term like Surrenden Farm. Mr. Degen said he had been charged with discussing Groton's participation in the CPA and at what surcharge rate with the CPC adding he was scheduled on one of the CPC's upcoming agendas to discuss this.

Ms. Pine said that the CPA funded a lot of worthwhile projects and thought the track was one of those projects. Mr. Robertson said that this was a creative way of trying to fund a portion of this. Mr. Giger asked if there was a way to fund some of this with CPA funds and bond some of it. Mr. Haddad said he would want to check with the OPM on that and whether the MSBA would accept this.

Mr. Degen said that they had a policy to not vote on something the same night it was presented. Mr. Degen said he was extremely uncomfortable with a multiyear bonding of a project using CPA funds. Mr. Haddad said he didn't see any harm in filing the application and withdrawing it if that's what decided. Mr. Giger said that they didn't have the information yet on

what the best solution was for the Town. Mr. Haddad said they weren't telling the CPC what to do, just submitting an application and they decide how and if to fund it.

*Ms. Pine moved that the Town Manager prepare an application to the CPC to fund the cost of building a new track as part of the Flo Ro replacement school project. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. Roll Call: Pine-aye; Manugian-aye; Reilly-aye; Degen-nay; Giger-nay*

**TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT – CONT.**

7. Mr. Haddad said that Lowell Five would like to donate \$2,500 to be used toward Diversity Education and Inclusion and asked the Board to consider accepting the gift. Ms. Manugian said they would obviously want to accept this with much gratitude.

*Mr. Degen moved to accept the gift of Lowell Five of \$2,500 and graciously thank them for their contribution. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. Roll Call: Pine-aye; Degen-aye; Manugian-aye; Reilly-aye; Giger-aye*

8. Mr. Haddad said that he wanted to fill the Assistant Assessor position but wanted the Board's position on it. Mr. Degen and Ms. Pine were fine with filling the position of Assistant Assessor. Mr. Giger asked if they needed 2 fulltime positions. Mr. Haddad said that they needed two fulltime people adding they were going into a full revaluation year. Mr. Haddad said that they examined every single position when looking at the budget. Mr. Robertson said that they used to have 2 ½ positions in that office and then downsized to 2 positions. The Board agreed to advertise the position of Assistant Assessor.

9. Mr. Haddad said he the budget would be sent out to the Board and Finance Committee within the next few days.

10. Mr. Haddad said that he would work on the Board's meeting schedule with the Chair and get it to the Board for their next meeting.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Ms. Manugian said Mr. Degen requested that they have a discussion with the Board of Health and Water Department about PFAS. She said he proposed January 4<sup>th</sup> for that meeting. Ms. Manugian said that Mr. Degen had also asked State Representative Harrington to attend a future meeting and have her address some questions and topics that had arisen. Mr. Giger suggested inviting Senator Kennedy in also. Ms. Manugian asked the Board to send her any suggestions they had. Mr. Degen provided his reasoning for wanting a joint meeting with the Board of Health and Water Commission to talk about PFAS. Ms. Manugian asked for the Board to be co-posted for the January 4<sup>th</sup> meeting and asked if Tom Orcutt could educate them in advance on PFAS.

Mr. Haddad said that because the Board was not meeting again before January 4<sup>th</sup>, he asked if they could vote again now to extend the signatory authority to John Reilly and the Town Manager through February 4<sup>th</sup> 2021.

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

**MINUTES**

*Ms. Pine moved to approve the meeting minutes of December 14, 2020 as presented. Mr. Degen seconded the motion. Roll Call: Manugian-aye; Pine-aye; Degen-aye; Giger-aye; Reilly-aye*

Ms. Manugian adjourned the meeting at 9:11pm.

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

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

Date Approved: