



## TOWN OF GROTON

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

## Select Board

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

**Town Manager**  
Mark W. Haddad

**SELECT BOARD MEETING**  
**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2023**  
**AGENDA**  
**SELECT BOARD MEETING ROOM**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> FLOOR**  
**GROTON TOWN HALL**

7:00 P.M.      Announcements and Review Agenda for the Public

7:05 P.M.      Public Comment Period

I.      7:06 P.M.      Town Manager's Report

1. Review Memo from Town Clerk on Early Voting and Mail-In Voting for Annual Town Election
2. Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Development Update
3. Update on Select Board Meeting Schedule Through 2023 Spring Town Meeting

II.      7:10 P.M.      Items for Select Board Consideration and Action

1. Approve Letter of Support to Community Preservation Committee on Affordable Housing Trust Application
2. Approve Application to MRPC to Update Walkability Study
3. Approve One Day Wine and Malt Beverage License for the Friends of Prescott for an Open Mic Night at the Prescott School on Friday, March 10, 2023 from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

III.      7:15 P.M.      Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee – Annual Report Update

### OTHER BUSINESS

ON-GOING ISSUES – Review and Informational Purposes – Brief Comments - Items May or May Not Be Discussed

- A. Water Department – Manganese Issue
- B. PFAS Issue
- C. Green Communities Application and Implementation
- D. Florence Roche Elementary School Construction Project
- E. ARPA Funding

### SELECT BOARD LIAISON REPORTS

IV.      Minutes:      Regularly Scheduled Meeting of February 6, 2023

### ADJOURNMENT

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



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**Town Manager**  
Mark W. Haddad

**To:** *Select Board*

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

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

**Date:** *February 13, 2023*

### TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Please note that I will not be present at Monday's meeting as I will be on vacation. Dawn Dunbar, who I have designated as Acting Town Manager, will cover the meeting. In addition to the Town Manager's Report, Items for Select Board Consideration and Action and a review of the On-going Issues List, there is one item scheduled on Monday's Agenda. The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee will be in to provide the Board with an update as to their activities.

1. Enclosed with this Report is a memorandum from Town Clerk Dawn Dunbar providing the Board with an update on Early Voting and Mail-In Voting for the upcoming 2023 Annual Town Election. Ms. Dunbar will provide the Board with a further update at Monday's meeting.
2. The Groton Dunstable Regional School Superintendent has released her Proposed FY 2024 Budget to the School Committee. Groton's proposed Operating Assessment for FY 2024 is \$26,800,655, which is \$1,262,939 more than I am carrying in my proposed Budget for FY 2024. The Finance Team and I will be working over the next several weeks trying to determine how to balance the budget. The Select Board and Finance Committee are scheduled to hold an Executive Session on February 27<sup>th</sup> beginning at 5:30 p.m. to discuss Collective Bargaining adjustments that may cover some, if not all, of this deficit. There will be a joint budget meeting between the Finance Committee and Select Board on Saturday, March 4<sup>th</sup> beginning at 8:30 a.m. Please note that the GDRSD Committee will hold a formal Public Hearing on the Budget on February 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in the Middle School Performing Arts Center.



**Select Board**  
**Weekly Agenda Update/Report**  
**February 13, 2023**  
**page two**

3. Please see the update to the meeting schedule that will take the Board through the 2023 Spring Town Meeting:

Monday, February 20, 2023	-No Meeting (President's Day Holiday)
Monday, February 27, 2023	-Executive Session to Review Collective Bargaining Budgeting Related Issues -Review First Draft of 2023 Spring Town Meeting Warrant -Consider Approving DPW Director in Training Program
Saturday, March 4, 2023	-Joint Budget Meeting with Finance Committee
Monday, March 6, 2023	-Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, March 13, 2023	-Public Hearing on 2023 Spring Town Meeting Warrant Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Wednesday, March 15, 2023	-School Committee Approves Budget
Monday, March 20, 2023	-No Meeting
Monday, March 27, 2023	-Continuation of Public Hearing on Mail In Voting at Annual Town Election
Monday, April 3, 2023	-Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, April 10, 2023	-Approve Warrant for Posting
Monday, April 17, 2023	-No Meeting (Patriot's Day)
Monday, April 24, 2023	-Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Saturday, April 29, 2023	-2023 Spring Town Meeting

**ITEMS FOR SELECT BOARD CONSIDERATION AND ACTION**

1. I have drafted a letter of support to the Community Preservation Committee for the Affordable Housing Trust's application as discussed at your meeting last week. It is attached to this Report for your review. I would respectfully request that the Board approve this letter for submission to the Community Preservation Committee.
2. The Planning Board has reached out to the Montachusett Metropolitan Planning Organization (MRPC) for Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) assistance to study walkability in Groton. As you know, the Town has a very extensive trail network. Unfortunately, with very few exceptions, they cannot be accessed on foot. Pedestrian activity continues to increase, which speaks to the need to improve non-vehicular access to popular destinations in Town. According to the Planning Board, other rural communities such as Acton, Concord, Carlisle and Lincoln have been able to accommodate pedestrian access with the creation of paved walking paths along roadways. The MRPC had prepared a Walkability Study for Groton about ten years ago. This Study focused on the Downtown area from Mill Run Plaza to CVS and much of the study area has been connected to date. MRPC recommends that the Town update the Study. MRPC further recommends that we apply for a competitive grant from them to complete this update. Both the Planning Board and Select Board need to submit a letter of interest. I would respectfully request that the Board vote to submit an application to the MRPC to update the Walkability Study. The Planning Board will be taking a similar vote as well.
3. I would respectfully request that the Select Board approve a One Day Wine and Malt Beverage License for the Friends of Prescott for an Open Mic Night to be held at the Prescott School on Friday, March 10, 2023 from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

MWH/rjb  
enclosures



**Diversity Equity  
and Inclusion**  
173 Main Street  
Groton, Massachusetts 01450  
selectboard@grotonma.gov

Raquel Majeski, Chair  
Michelle Collette, Vice Chair  
Gordon Candow  
Susan Hughes  
Deirdre Slavin Mitchell  
James Moore  
Fran Stanley

**DEI Committee Charge:** The main goal of this committee is to recognize and commemorate the diversity of the residents of Groton, past and present. To do so, the committee will examine our town for areas of unequal representation within our public institutions and spaces, both explicit and implicit, while also creating opportunities to celebrate our diversity as a community. The committee will provide research-based observations and recommendations to the Select Board, focus on the education of our residents, and commit to open dialogue and engagement with our residents.

**Committee Composition**

The committee is currently made up of seven members including Officer Gordon Candow who is a nonvoting member. Barbara Rich is a community member who has shown interest, attended a meeting, and soon to be sworn in. We made the decision not to limit membership based on affiliation or representation from other groups.

**Reporting incidents of hate and hate crimes**

The committee was asked by the Select Board to formulate impactful Select Board and Groton-wide interventions to recognize, denounce, and prevent incidents of prejudicial hatred and injustice, such as Anti-Semitism, Racial and Religious Bigotry, Homophobia, and White Supremacy.

In response to this request, the committee recommends the following:

In moments of hate incidents and hate crimes, the Select Board will make a statement to condemn the incident and recognize the victimized community excluding incidents that take place in the school.

On a yearly basis, the Select Board will hear a report from the DEI committee on incidents of hate and hate crimes occurring within the town.

The DEI committee will host a forum on educating the community about official hate incidents and crimes. The forum will include the Middlesex District Attorney, Marian Ryan as a resource and keynote.

**Initiatives**

The committee is committed to supporting the Nashoba Valley Chorale in their promotional and housekeeping activity for the *Chariot Jubilee* by Nathan Dett.

The committee is committed to partnering with neighboring towns to plan Juneteenth initiatives.

Respectfully Submitted by the DEI Committee,

Gordon Candow  
Michelle Collette (vice chair)  
Susan Hughes  
RaquelMajeski(chair)  
JamesMoore  
DeirdreSlavinMitchell  
Fran Stanley





Office of the Town Clerk – Notary Public  
Town of Groton  
173 Main Street  
Groton, MA 01450

Dawn E. Dunbar, Town Clerk  
Phone: 978-448-1100  
FAX: 978-448-2030  
[ddunbar@grotonma.gov](mailto:ddunbar@grotonma.gov)

**TO:** Mark W. Haddad, Town Manager  
**FROM:** Dawn Dunbar, Town Clerk  
**Date:** February 9, 2023  
**RE:** Update to Vote by Mail and In Person Early Voting – May 23, 2023 Annual Election

At the Massachusetts Town's Clerk's Conference held last week, there was a lengthy discussion about Vote by Mail and In Person Early Voting and the new election law that took effect last summer. The discussion was led by Michelle Tassinari, Director and Legal Counsel for the Elections Division of the Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth. As a point of clarification, I explained to her and the group that the Groton Board of Registrars did not want to recommend In Person Early Voting and therefore took no action at their meeting held on January 24<sup>th</sup>. I specifically asked her if the Board of Registrars in fact needed to officially vote to not recommend In Person Early Voting or if by them taking no action was considered the same. I was told by Michelle that if the Board of Registrars are not recommending In Person Early Voting that no action needed to be taken, therefore I do not need to hold another meeting to have them officially vote to not recommend. What this also means is that the Select Board, because they do not have a recommendation of at least 50% of the Board of Registrars can not decide on their own to hold In Person Early Voting. The only option for the Town at this point is to offer the residents and voters ballots to Vote by Mail.

With the public hearing on Vote by Mail being continued to March 27, 2023, I wanted to provide you and the Board with this important update. It was clear at the public hearing held on January 30<sup>th</sup> that members of the Select Board were leaning towards offering either Vote by Mail or In Person Early Voting so at this point, Vote by Mail would be their only option. If the Select Board would like to offer Vote by Mail for the May 23, 2023 Annual Town Election, they would not need to take any action at the public hearing continuation as we are required by law to offer Vote by Mail, unless they do in fact decide to vote to opt out.

I appreciate everyone's patience as I learn the ins and out of this new law as this will be the first Town Election that this takes effect. I look forward to updating the Select Board at their meeting on February 13<sup>th</sup> and again at the public hearing continuation on March 27<sup>th</sup>.



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**Town Manager**  
Mark W. Haddad

February 14, 2023

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

RE: Affordable Housing Trust  
2023 CPA Application

Dear Members of the Committee:

At the regularly scheduled meeting of the Groton Select Board held on Monday, February 6, 2023, the Board met with the Affordable Housing Trust. During the meeting, the Trust reviewed their 2023 CPA Application in which they are seeking \$200,000 from the Community Preservation Housing Fund that would be spent on any and all allowable community housing purposes. The Trust is seeking these funds to provide flexibility to react when an opportunity to create affordable housing arises. Further, they will seek annual appropriations from the Community Housing Fund to accumulate funds over successive funding cycles to increase the capacity of the Trust to do its work. This is very similar to the annual appropriation that the Conservation Commission receives for the Conservation Fund to provide them with the same kind of flexibility when prime land becomes available.

The Affordable Housing Trust is committed to creating affordable housing in Groton and this appropriation from the Community Housing Fund is an important step in that process. It is also important to point out that the Trust is working with the Select Board and Finance Committee to develop a policy that sets an annual funding amount. The Select Board is planning on meeting with the Trust and the Finance Committee later this year to develop this policy prior to applying for funding in 2024.

The Select Board recommends that the Community Preservation Committee approve this application and present it to the voters for funding at the 2023 Spring Town Meeting. The Select Board appreciates your acceptance of this recommendation.

Sincerely,

On Behalf of the Groton Select Board

Mark W. Haddad  
Town Manager

MWH/rjb

cc: Select Board  
Finance Committee  
Affordable Housing Trust

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2023  
TOWN HALL SECOND FLOOR MEETING ROOM**

**SB Members Present:** Rebecca H. Pine, Vice Chair; Matthew F. Pisani, Clerk; Alison S. Manugian, Peter S. Cunningham

**SB Absent:** John Reilly, Chair

**Also Present:** Dawn Dunbar, Town Clerk, Patricia DuFresne, Town Accountant; Hannah Moller, Town Treasurer/Tax Collector, Bud Robertson, Finance Member, Affordable Housing Trust: Becky Pine, Chair, Carolyn Perkins, Phil Francisco, Richard Perini; Fran Stanley

Ms. Pine called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and reviewed the agenda.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Ms. Pine said that Mr. Haddad would not be present for tonight's meeting due to a family emergency and Dawn Dunbar, Town Clerk, would be filling in as acting Town Manager.

Bud Robertson, Finance Member, said that he and Mr. Haddad had met with a few members of the Friends of Prescott to discuss their revenue and budgets for the last two years (2022& 2023). The projected revenue in 2022 was surpassed by \$80,000 and the Town had received \$11,887. Mr. Robertson explained that the Town receives 5% of their net revenue and their revenue is anticipated to double with the opening of the after school programs. The Town can expect \$35,000 if the programs commence in March after receiving outstanding permits from the State. Mr. Robertson said that the Town has not provided the Prescott Building any funding since 2019. He said that he was very pleased after touring the school and observing the dramatic renovations that were conducted by the Friends of Prescott.

Mr. Cunningham said that Mr. Haddad distributed a letter that was compiled by Senator Cronin to address the repairs and paving needed along the Nashua River Rail Trail, the letter was signed by all three delegates and forwarded to the Department of Conservation & Recreation.

Ms. Pine reminded everyone that the nomination papers are available for the annual Town Election and that she would be running for another term on the Select Board.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

**TOWN MANAGERS REPORT**

**1. Town Treasurer/Tax Collector Hannah Moller - Approve and Sign Bond Anticipation Note Documents for Recent Issue.**

Ms. Dunbar requested that the Select Board approve and sign the Bond Anticipation note documents for the various issues, including the new Middle School Track, Water Treatment Plan, the new Whitney Pond Well, and the Police Radios. She said that Ms. Moller has accepted a \$12,632,050 million split bid between Piper Sandler & Co and Fidelity Capital Market. Piper Sandler & Co offered a 3.5% interest rate on \$5 million with a premium of \$38,000 and Fidelity Capital Markets was awarded \$7,632,050 at a 4% interest rate with a premium of \$103,796. Ms. Dunbar said that amount would be received on February 17, 2023 and said that these rates were outstanding due to the Town's AAA Bonding Rate.



Ms. Moller said that the bids on the Select Boards vote show a premium that is slightly less than what is being shown and explained that the underwriters subtract their percentage automatically. Ms. Pine asked what NIC stands for. Ms. Moller said that NIC is the Net Interest Cost (net of any fees + the premium). Mr. Cunningham asked why a split bid had occurred. Ms. Moller said when the offer was presented a minimum bid of \$1 million was set and a minimum premium was set to cover the Town's fees. Piper Sandler & Co had offered the lowest interest rate however, would not cover the entire amount. The second bid was then awarded with a request to lower their entirety resulting in the split. Ms. Manugian questioned if Fidelity had the opportunity to deny the request. Ms. Moller assumed that Fidelity had the chance to pass on the stipulations that were made.

*Ms. Manugian made a motion to accept the funds as a split bid as presented to the Select Board. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.*

## **2. Notification of Town Manager's Vacation and Designation of Acting Town Manager**

Ms. Dunbar said that Mr. Haddad submitted an official notification of his absence commencing on February 13, 2023 through February 21, 2023 and that he had appointed herself, Dawn Dunbar as acting Town Manager.

## **3. ARPA Funding Update**

Ms. Dufresne provided the Select Board with an update on the ARPA funding. She said that the Town was allotted \$3,385,120 million during the pandemic from the US Treasury and 59% had been expended. She said that there is \$1.3 million remaining and the amount has been allocated between ten projects. Ms. Dufresne said that Groton Dunstable Regional School District received \$900,000 to assist in learning loss mitigation, salaries, creating appropriate social distancing, and renovations. She said that the budgeted amount has been depleted. Mr. Cunningham asked if the allotment was received directly to the School District. Ms. Dufresne said that the Town had originally received the funds and the School District was a sub recipient. The School District approached the Town with a budget and requested for the additional assistance. The Communication Towers Project is approximately a \$1 million project and a 911 Development Grant has been awarded along with the \$650,000 from the ARPA funds. The money will be utilized to replace two towers to capture all communication gaps. \$422,000 has been expended and the remaining balance is anticipated to be utilized. Ms. Dufresne said that \$170,000 was budgeted for Employee Retention and there is a projection of \$19,000 in return. \$450,000 has been funded to Public Safety Operations and Dispatch, \$150,000 will be utilized for renovations and the remaining \$300,000 will provide relief to the annual ambulance receipt that was impacted during covid. \$56,067 was budgeted to replace a DPW employee in FY22 and that total of \$38,000 is being entirely budgeted this year in the DPW budget and the remaining \$18,000 was utilized for covid related expenses. She said that \$244,886 is being funded to repair the Taylor Street water main that is prone to leak and needs and to be upgraded. \$25,000 has been expended and the total amount is expected to be depleted. Ms. Dufresne said that \$520,000 was budgeted for the Nod Road sewer pump station and that there is an enormous gap to ensure adequate capacity. \$24,000 has been expended and \$50,000 is committed for I & I. There is \$495,810 remaining if the Town chooses not to fully upgrade the pump station. Ms. Manugian asked why the heading includes MassWorks. Ms. Dufresne said that the design and engineering needs to be conducted prior to becoming eligible to apply for a MassWorks Grant. Mr. Pisani commented that the upgrade to the Nod Road Pump station is essential to the Groton Farms development. \$8,000 has been budgeted for Interface Mental Health, there has been a significant impact to mental health from covid and that amount has been depleted. \$200,000 has been budgeted for the Engineering for Broadmeadow Road and \$106,000 has been expended and is expected to be completely depleted. \$150,000 has been budgeted for the PFAS at the high school to cover the engineering costs. Ms. Dufresne said that conversations are just commencing and the issue needs to be addressed. She said

that \$29,000 has been budgeted for Administrative/ Auditing, and a consultant was hired to interpret the law and determine what projects would be eligible to utilize the ARPA funding. The Town is audited every year that it continues to spend the funding and each single audit costs \$6,000. Ms. Dufresne said there potentially could be \$5,000- \$10,000 remaining from \$29,000 budgeted. There is \$7,000 in available funding and potentially a total of \$473,000 that can be repurposed if the budgeted amount for the Nod Road Sewer Pump Station is not utilized. Ms. Pine asked if there is a deadline to utilize the ARPA funds. Ms. Dufresne said that the funds need to be committed by December of 2024 and need to be expended by December of 2026.

#### 4. Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Development Update

Ms. Dufresne said that the Finance Committee attended the Town Official's Breakfast held at Nashoba Tech and Nashoba Tech had projected an assessment of \$733,000 for FY24, the Town had budgeted \$810,000. They were told that the exact amount would be finalized on March 1, 2023. Ms. Manugian said that they were cautioned that the senior class is very small and enrollment is expected to grow. Ms. Dufresne said that the school anticipates an expenditure of \$10-\$15 million in capital infrastructure in the upcoming years. Ms. Dufresne said that she was notified today that the health insurance premium rate is set for 13.75% and the Town had projected 11%. The individual plan percentages have not been received and there will be a minimal impact on the \$3,000 deficit. Ms. Dunbar said that Mr. Haddad would be exploring reducing estimated receipts. Ms. Dufresne said that Licenses and Permits and Recreation Marijuana would be the first items to be reviewed. Ms. Pine asked when the first dispensary was scheduled to open. Ms. Dunbar said that they are waiting for the States approval and hope to open in March or April.

#### 5. Update on Select Board Meeting Schedule Through 2023 Spring Town Meeting

Wednesday, February 8, 2023	-GDRSD Committee Meeting- Superintendent Presents Preliminary Budget
Monday, February 13, 2023	- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee Update
Monday, February 20, 2023	- No Meeting (President's Day)
Monday, February 27, 2023	- Executive Session to review collective Bargaining Budgeting Related Issues
	- Review First Draft of 2023 Spring Town Meeting Warrant
Saturday, March 4, 2023	- Joint Budget Meeting with Finance Committee
Monday, March 6, 2023	- Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, March 13, 2023	- Public Hearing of 2023 Spring Warrant Regularly Scheduled meeting
Wednesday, March 15, 2023	- School Committee Approves Budget
Monday, March 20, 2023	- No Meeting
Monday, March 27, 2023	- Continuation of Public Hearing on Mail In Voting at Annual Town Election
Monday, April 3, 2023	- Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, April 10, 2023	- Approve Warrant for Posting
Monday, April 17, 2023	- No Meeting (Patriot's Day)
Monday April 24, 2023	- Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Saturday, April 29, 2023	-2023 Spring Town Meeting

#### ITEMS FOR SELECT BOARD CONSIDERATION AND ACTION

1. **Ms. Dunbar asked the Select Board to consider appointing Ann Carpenter to the Invasive Species Committee.**

*Ms. Manugian made a motion to appoint Ann Carpenter to the Invasive Species Committee. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.*

2. **Ms. Dunbar asked the Select Board to consider appointing Nancy Muller, Judith Romatelli and Harris McWade to the Local Cultural Council.**

*Ms. Manugian made a motion to appoint Nancy Muller, Judith Romatelli, and Harris McWade to the Cultural Council. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.*

### **Affordable Housing Trust – Annual Report Update**

Ms. Pine called the Affordable Housing Trust to order at 7:17pm.

The Affordable Housing Trust displayed a PowerPoint presentation to review with the Select Board. Ms. Perkins defined Affordable Housing as a dwelling that a household can obtain by purchasing or renting at 30% of the household's income. She said that it is deed restricted to ensure affordability to low-income residents. Benefits of Affordable Housing included allowing residents to remain in their community long-term, improve social determinants of health, support the local and regional economy, and ensure stability. She explained the importance of the 10% goal that the State imposes on the total year round housing units in the Town of Groton. She said that if the percentage is achieved that the Town is rewarded with eligibility to apply for Housing Choice designation which increases their chances to obtain other State grants. There is also more control over local development of 40B proposals. If the percentage is not satisfied the Town does not receive bonus points on State grant applications and the Housing Choice grants are inaccessible. There will also be less control on 40B proposals. Ms. Pine said that in 2010 Groton's subsidized housing inventory was 3,930 and only 216 of those units were affordable units. The percentage calculated at 5.5% and eight units were lost in a fire. In 2020 the number of year round housing had not been inventoried. With the anticipation of the development of Groton Farms (500 Main Street) 200 units will be added to the Town's affordable housing inventory due to being zoned as a 40B Development. Ms. Pine explained that in Group Homes the State allows each bedroom serving an adult to be considered its own affordable unit. Mr. Cunningham asked about the development on Cow Pond Brook Road. Ms. Pine said that the 40B proposal is in process however, there are some issues that need to be addressed and have caused a delay. Ms. Pine said that it is important to exceed the 10% goal even beyond the expected Groton Farms Development due to the amount of new homes that continue to be constructed and are added to the housing inventory. She said that some affordable units will expire commencing in 2029 and will not remain in perpetuity. Housing prices continue to increase and there is a demand for more affordable housing. Ms. Pine read an article from the Groton Herald from 2021 that reiterated the benefits to why it is significant to expand the opportunities for low income housing and by increasing the supply it allows for a broader range of people to reside in Groton also assisting in social factors. Ms. Pine listed the accomplishments of the Trust including two large housing meetings to promote coordination and transparency among Groton Housing- related Boards, both CPC applications that were submitted were approved by Town Meeting, and participating in the development of MBTA community zoning which requires the Town of Groton to create high density multi-family zoning districts. She said that the AHT will push to include the 10% in Groton's version of this zoning.

Mr. Perini discussed the due diligence assessment of the Hoyts Wharf parcel. He said that after the assessment from Natural Heritage they would only allow for a single house lot utilizing two acres of the ten acres presented. He then displayed two possibilities for the development, one being a group home for veterans or disabled adults or a single family dwelling or a duplex built by Habitat for Humanity. He said that the AHT would be meeting with the Veterans Alliance in the last week of February and is in hopes that they are interested in becoming a co-developer. The current and future activities planned for



the AHT are commencing assessing the potential development of the two Fieldstone Drive parcels that are owned by the Town. There is a total of 18 acres between the two lots however, Natural Heritage has provided guidance and has approved development on approximately six acres.

Mr. Francisco said that the Trust has submitted a CPA application requesting \$200,000 to be transferred from the Community Housing funds. He said that the application includes a grant agreement or legal contract that provides an oversight for the Town to review how the funds will be utilized. Mr. Francisco said that the AHT is requesting a letter of support from the Select Board. It is important for the Trust to have sufficient funds to have the flexibility and capability of acquiring opportunities that may arise. Mr. Francisco said that the AHT is also requesting a policy to be established to acquire ongoing predictable CPC funding. He said the policy would be very similar to the Conservation Commission's annual appropriation. He suggested that a percentage of funds be withdrawn from both the CPC Community Housing Reserves and from the Unallocated Reserves.

Ms. Pine said that consistent funding is necessary to be able to react to any market opportunities. The AHT has lost out on great opportunities such as the apartment building that became available on Adams Ave and without having sufficient funding they could not acquire the property. Ms. Pine said that the AHT is committed to the Town to utilize its funding's in the most effective and efficient way to create affordable housing.

Mr. Pisani asked if there were any plans to rebuild the portion of Winthrop complex that had burned down. Ms. Pine said that the Town obtains no jurisdiction on that particular property and it is privately owned. Ms. Stanley said that that complex made up  $\frac{1}{3}$  of their affordable units and that she had a conversation with the Department of Agriculture in 2020 and asked if additional subsidized units could be rebuilt and they had answered yes, however the private owner needed to submit the request. She believes since his actions were not immediate that there would be a negative impact on prolonging the rebuild. Mr. Cunningham asked if the owner had been approached and suggested offering a partnership to rebuild. Ms. Stanley said in the past the owner has had minimal interaction with the Town, however she agreed to reach out and ask what his intentions are.

Mr. Cunningham commented that he supported the idea of the request for consistent funding and that the AHT is not only exploring developing new structures, they are also looking at renovating old structures. Mr. Perini said that is correct, all avenues need to be explored due to inflation.

Ms. Manugian questioned the overlapping of the Housing Authority and the Affordable Housing Trust and was concerned with permanently allocating funds to one committee over the other. Ms. Pine said that the Housing Authority receives the majority of their funding from the State; however this year they did request funding from the CPC to develop housing. Ms. Pine assured the Select Board that the Trust has been courteous to the other housing groups and that is the reason why they requested the amount and percentage from unallocated funds to ensure that there were adequate funds remaining. Ms. Pine said that AHT would be meeting with the Housing Authority this week to discuss what each other's needs and intentions are. Ms. Perkins said that the two committees have met previously and have discussed items that they could collaborate on. Ms. Manugain asked what the AHT intentions are with the \$200,000 and what number they would like to build up their reserve to. Ms. Pine said that the \$200,000 would commence the balance of their reserves and that an exact amount has not been determined. There is further discussion planned for the summer.

Mr. Robertson said that the Finance Committee had met with the AHT in November and had supported transferring \$200,000 from an existing fund into the Trust however; they needed to explore how the next funding would be sourced. He recommended that a track record be reviewed later this summer to ensure what funding is necessary.

Ms. Manugian asked the amount of funds that were received from the assessment. Ms. Pine said that the AHT received \$75,000 and explained the importance of building up reserves so they can acquire a parcel that is ready to develop so the State can then go through their own process and have a low income tax developer build the house. The Town owned parcels are becoming very limited. Mr. Cunningham agreed that there needs to be a perfect balance and the Conservation Commission has arrived at a percentage of the Town's Budget and the model has worked very well. Mr. Perini commented that some grants are not eligible unless a project has been acquired and with the additional funding that can be accomplished.

Ms. Manugian said that she is supportive of Affordable Housing however she is uncomfortable with categorizing funds to the Trust to make decisions without the public's vote or knowledge. Ms. Pine noted that the application includes the Trusts agreement and how the money would be expensed. She assured Ms. Manugian that the Trust does not expend funds quickly or easily. Mr. Pisani agreed that the Trust should obtain a balance of funds to be able to react quickly on acquiring property that becomes available.

The Select Board requested that the letter of support be drafted for a determination.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

**Ms. Dunbar said that the Groton Conservation Trust is requesting a one day beer and wine license for the Groton Conservation Forum to be held at the Center in West Groton on Thursday, February 16, 2023 from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.**

*Mr. Cunningham made a motion to approve the request from the Groton Conservation Trust for a one day beer and wine license for the Groton Conservation Forum to be held at the Center in West Groton on Thursday, February 16, 2023 from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.*

Ms. Manugian commented that she is concerned about the use of the Prescott Building and the proposed childcare program. She believes that the Committee is changing their direction and would like to request that the Select Board further discuss the issue. Mr. Cunningham said that there are special protocols and permitting required when establishing a childcare program. Ms. Manugian said that they are in the process of receiving permits; however the State does not require material testing if the children are 5 or older.

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

Ms. Pine said that the PFAS Issue will be discussed jointly with the School Committee on Wednesday, February 6, 2023 at 6:00 PM at the Middle School Performing Arts Center.

#### **MINUTES**

*Mr. Pisani made a motion to approve the minutes of the regularly scheduled meeting on January 30, 2023. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion was carried. Mr. Cunningham-abstain*

The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 pm.

Respectively submitted by Kristine Fox, Minute Taker