



TOWN OF GROTON

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

Select Board

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

Town Manager
Mark W. Haddad

SELECT BOARD MEETING
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2024
AGENDA
SELECT BOARD MEETING ROOM
2nd FLOOR
GROTON TOWN HALL

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

6:05 P.M. Public Comment Period

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

1. Consider Ratifying the Town Manager's Appointment of Gordon Candow as a Sergeant on the Groton Police Department.
2. FY 2025 Budget Update
3. Update on Select Board Schedule through the 2024 Spring Town Meeting

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

1. Consider Approving Location, Dates and Times for In-Person Early Voting for the April 2nd Special Election and April 23rd Annual Town Election Based on the Recommendation from the Board of Registrars
2. Consider Approving a One Day All Alcoholic Beverages License for the Annual Taste of Nashoba to be held on Tuesday, March 19, 2024 at Lawrence Academy from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
3. Consider Approving Letters of Support to the Community Preservation Committee for the Proposed Prescott Building Assessment and Outdoor Fitness Court
4. Consider Amending Committee Vacancy Policy to Limit the Time a Committee Interest Form will be kept on File for Consideration to Six (6) Months

III. 6:15 P.M. Update from the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee

OTHER BUSINESS

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

- A. PFAS Issue
- B. Green Communities Application and Implementation
- C. Florence Roche Elementary School Construction Project
- D. Administrator's Working Group on FY 2025 Budget

SELECT BOARD LIAISON REPORTS

IV. Minutes: Regularly Scheduled Meeting of January 29, 2024

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 5, 2024*

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

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 update the Board on their activities and future plans. This is one of the Annual Goals of the Board.

1. As you are aware, there is a Sergeant vacancy on the Groton Police Department. Pursuant to the Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Groton Patrolmen's Association, Police Chief Michael Luth conducted a competitive promotional process that included a test, an Oral Board with area Police Chiefs and an interview with Chief Luth and Deputy Chief Rachael Bielecki. Based on the outcome of the process, Chief Luth has recommended that I appoint Gordon Candow as Sergeant. Enclosed with this Report is a letter from Chief Luth outlining the process and his recommendation. I have wholeheartedly accepted Chief Luth's recommendation and have appointed Mr. Candow as Sergeant. Please consider this as notification to the Board of my appointment. I would respectfully request that the Board consider ratifying this appointment at Monday's meeting.
2. With regard to the FY 2025 Budget Update, I have two updates. First, as discussed last week, I have scheduled a Budget Forum with the State Delegation of Groton and Dunstable to discuss State Aid. Senators Cronin and Kennedy and Representatives Scarsdale and Sena have agreed to meet with us at the Board's February 12th Meeting. I have also invited the Groton Finance Committee, Dunstable Board of Selectmen and Advisory Committee and the Groton Dunstable Regional School District Committee to the meeting. Due to the number of people invited, we have moved the meeting to the Groton Center, 163 West Main Street. The meeting will commence at 6:00 p.m. Second, the Finance Committee will be meeting with me on February 6th at 7:00 p.m. to continue their review of the Budget. I have posted a Select Board Meeting for that date as well in the event that a quorum of the Select Board decides to attend. I will provide the Board with any further update on the budget at Monday's meeting.

Select Board
Weekly Agenda Update/Report
February 5, 2024
page two

3. Please see the update to the Select Board's Meeting schedule through the Annual Election:

Monday, February 12, 2024	-Budget Forum with State Delegation – Groton Center
Monday, February 19, 2024	-No Meeting – President's Day Holiday
Monday, February 26, 2024	-Public Hearing on the Warrant – Held at Groton Center
Tuesday, February 27, 2024	-Special Budget Forum – Swallow Union Elementary School
Monday, March 4, 2024	-Issue Warrant for Town Meeting – REMOTE MEETING
Wednesday, March 6, 2024	-Special Budget Forum – Groton (Senior) Center
Monday, March 11, 2024	-Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, March 18, 2024	-No Meeting
Monday, March 25, 2024	-Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Tuesday, March 26, 2024	-2024 Spring Town Meeting
Monday, April 1, 2024	-Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Tuesday, April 2, 2024	-Special Election to Consider an Override of Proposition 2½
Monday, April 8, 2024	-Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, April 15, 2024	-No Meeting – Patriot's Day Holiday
Monday, April 22, 2024	-Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Tuesday, April 23, 2024	-2024 Annual Town Election

ITEMS FOR SELECT BOARD CONSIDERATION AND ACTION

1. Town Clerk Dawn Dunbar has provided the following information for Board consideration:

The Board of Registrars have voted 3 in favor, 1 against, to recommend to the Select Board that they vote to hold in-person early voting for both the April 2nd Special Election and April 23rd Town Election. Greg Baran voted against this recommendation because he believes in-person early voting should not commence until after the Town Meeting on March 26th (so start in person early voting on Wednesday, March 27th). The other three members understood his position but felt as though scheduling consistency was important, especially this election year. They also felt like there would be plenty of opportunities for the public to inform themselves of the ballot question ask prior to the Town Meeting on March 26th. The Select Board will, as part of their vote if they are so inclined, need to vote the location, days and hours of in-person early voting. The Town Clerk recommends the following schedule:

April 2nd Special Election – In-person early voting schedule @ the Town Clerk's Office

- Saturday, March 23 – 9am-3pm
- Monday, March 25 – 8am-7pm
- Tuesday, March 26 – 8am-4pm

Continued on next page – Over >

Select Board
Weekly Agenda Update/Report
February 5, 2024
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1. **Continued:**

- Wednesday, March 27 – 8am-4pm
- Thursday, March 28 – 8am-4pm
- Friday, March 29 – 8am-1pm

April 23rd Annual Town Election – In-person early voting schedule @ the Town Clerk's Office

- Saturday, April 13 – 9am-3pm
- Monday, April 15 – 8am-7pm
- Tuesday, April 16 – 8am-4pm
- Wednesday, April 17 – 8am-4pm
- Thursday, April 18 – 8am-4pm
- Friday, April 19 – 8am-1pm

There will be no added cost to do this as the Town Clerk's staff will facilitate this. The Town Clerk will not bring in election workers to assist them. Also, as stated in MGL c. 41 §10, the Select Board is required to vote to place vacancies on the ballot. The vacancies for the Annual Town Election are as follows:

- Board of Assessors – 3 year term
- Park Commission – 1 year term
- Groton Sewer Commission – 3 year term
- Groton Housing Authority – 4 year term

2. I would respectfully request that the Select Board consider approving a One Day All Alcoholic Beverages License for the Annual Taste of Nashoba to be held on Tuesday, March 19, 2024 at Lawrence Academy from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
3. I would respectfully request that the Select Board consider approving letters of support to the Community Preservation Committee for the Proposed Prescott Building Assessment and Outdoor Fitness Court Projects. Draft letters are attached to this Report.
4. I have amended the Committee Vacancy Appointment Policy by stating that we would only keep Committee Interest Forms on File for six months. We have had instances of people applying for a vacancy over two years ago wondering why they weren't contacted when a vacancy opened up. This is too difficult to track and I would recommend we keep the time period shorter. The amended Policy is attached for your review and consideration.

MWH/rjb
enclosures



GROTON POLICE DEPARTMENT
Office of the Chief of Police

99 PLEASANT STREET
GROTON, MASSACHUSETTS 01450



Michael F. Luth
Chief of Police

TEL: (978) 448-5555
FAX: (978) 448-5603

January 26, 2023

Mark Haddad
Town Manager
Town of Groton
173 Main Street
Groton, MA 01463

Dear Mr. Haddad,

In accordance with the GPPA contract (*July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2025*) Article XXXIII, Promotions Section 1, On, Monday, January 22, 2024, Officers Candow, Davis, and Steward participated in the written portion of the 2024 Sergeant's process. On Tuesday, January 23, 2024, all three participated in the Oral Board conducted by Chief Sartell, (Townsend PD), Chief Nobel (Maynard PD), and Chief Quesada (Swampscott PD). On Thursday, January 25, 2024, each officer was interviewed by myself with Deputy Chief Bielecki present.

Each officer presented themselves in a courteous and professional manner and represented the Department in a positive light to the exam proctor and oral board.

The cumulative scores for each portion of the process were extremely close, separated by a few points. Each officer has a unique skillset and excelled in a different portion of the process. Following the interview, I reviewed the personnel and training files for each officer and (*Article XXXIII, Promotions, Section 1, #2*) Management's assessment of past job performance.

Based upon the scores, my interview and the review, I have selected Officer Gordon Candow for your consideration to be promoted to the rank of Sergeant.

I appreciate your consideration and look forward to discussing this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael F. Luth".

Michael F. Luth
Chief of Police



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February 5, 2023

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

RE: Groton Town Manager Application
CPC – Prescott Building Assessment

Dear Members of the Committee:

The Select Board respectfully requests your support for the Building Assessment Study for the Prescott School, which is currently being used as a Community Center and managed by the Friends of Prescott. The Select Board has asked the Capital Planning Advisory Committee to conduct this study to determine the long-term capital improvement costs associated with the building. Prescott School holds a special place in our community as a historic landmark and a place for the Community to gather for many activities. Under the management of the Friends of Prescott, it has become a vibrant center that brings people together, fosters connections, and promotes the well-being of our residents.

However, it is crucial to ensure that the building's infrastructure is in good condition. The Building Assessment Study will provide a comprehensive evaluation of the school's physical condition, identifying any areas that require immediate attention or long-term capital improvements. This study will help us make informed decisions about the necessary investments to maintain and enhance the building, ensuring its continued use as a safe and functional community center.

We respectfully request that the Committee approves this application and present it to the voters for funding at the 2024 Spring Town Meeting. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Groton Select Board

Peter S. Cunningham, Chair

PSC/mwh



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February 5, 2023

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

RE: Groton Town Manager Application
CPC – Outdoor Fitness Court

Dear Members of the Committee:

The Select Board respectfully requests your support for the proposed outdoor fitness court to be located at Town Field, adjacent to the Library and Basketball Court. The idea behind the outdoor fitness court is to create a space where community members of all ages can engage in physical activities and promote a healthy lifestyle. This court will provide a range of exercise equipment designed for outdoor use, catering to various fitness levels and preferences. The location at Town Field, with its proximity to the Library and other outdoor amenities, makes it an ideal spot to encourage community members to engage in physical activities while enjoying the beautiful surroundings.

We believe that the addition of an outdoor fitness center will greatly benefit our community in several ways. It will provide a free and accessible space for residents to exercise, promoting physical fitness and overall well-being. The center will also foster a sense of community, as individuals can come together and engage in healthy activities, encouraging social interaction and a sense of belonging.

We respectfully request that the Committee approves this application and present it to the voters for funding at the 2024 Spring Town Meeting. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Groton Select Board

Peter S. Cunningham, Chair

PSC/mwh



SELECT BOARD POLICY

Policy Category:	Board
Policy Number:	BOA – 2019 - 3
Latest Revision Date:	January 27 February 5, 20240

POLICY NAME: COMMITTEE VACANCY APPOINTMENT POLICY

I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a procedure in which vacancies on all Committees appointed by the Select Board and Town Manager are advertised and filled.

II. POLICY

1. When a vacancy occurs on a Committee, the Chair shall notify the Select Board / Town Manager's Office and Town Clerk of that vacancy.
2. The Select Board / Town Manager's Office shall advertise the vacancy, along with a description of the Committee's duties as outlined in the Committee's Charge, for a period of 3 weeks. A notice of the vacancy shall be posted on the Town of Groton's website, and distributed to all local media outlets.
3. Applicants shall submit a Committee Interest Form to the Select Board / Town Manager's Office which upon receipt will be forwarded to the Committee for review. A recommendation shall be made to the Select Board / Town Manager's Office by the Committee within 3 weeks of the application deadline. The applications of all candidates to vacancies shall be treated equally during the recommendation process. If the Charge of a particular Committee states that a member of the Committee shall be a Select Board member or their designee, the Select Board shall interview all candidates prior to making the appointment. The Select Board shall keep Committee Interests forms on file for six (6) months for consideration of a particular Committee vacancy that may arise during that time period. After six months, for a person to be considered for a vacancy, they must resubmit a Committee Interest form.



SELECT BOARD POLICY

4. Appointment Process

- a. **Select Board Appointed Committee:** Once a recommendation has been made to the Select Board, the Board may choose to take the recommendation of the Committee and vote to make the appointment at a public meeting of the Board, or choose to interview the candidates themselves. Should the Board decide to interview the Candidate(s), they shall schedule the interview(s) for the next regularly scheduled meeting that all the candidates can attend. All interviews will be done at an open meeting of the Select Board at which time a vote will also be taken.
- b. **Town Manager Appointed/Nominated Committee:** Once a recommendation has been made to the Town Manager, the Town Manager may choose to take the recommendation of the Committee and request that the Select Board ratify the appointment or accept the Town Manager's Nomination for appointment, or choose to interview the candidates himself/herself. If the Town Manager does not take the recommendation of the Committee, he/she shall notify the Committee Chairman that he has decided to appoint/nominate another candidate. Ratification of the appointment or acceptance of the Town Manager's Nomination shall be done in an open meeting of the Select Board.

5. Annual Reappointments

- a. In May of each year, the Town Manager's Office shall notify all employees and committee members that their term is expiring and ask them whether or not they would like to be reappointed. Vacancies caused by a member asking not to be reappointed shall be filled as outlined under Items 1, 2, 3 and 4 of this policy.
- b. Members wishing to be reappointed shall be brought forward to the Select Board for reappointment or ratification of the Town Manager's Appointment. Members of the Board who do wish to not reappoint any individual on the list, shall notify the Town Manager to remove said name from the list for separate consideration. Said individual shall be contacted directly by the Board member objecting to said reappointment. Should the individual wish to continue to be considered for reappointment the matter shall be discussed in open meeting as a standalone appointment during the overall reappointment considerations.

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, JANUARY 29, 2024
UN-APPROVED**

SB Members Present: Peter Cunningham, Chair; Alison Manugian, Clerk; Matt Pisani; Becky Pine

SB Members Absent: John Reilly, Vice Chair

Also Present: Mark Haddad, Town Manager; Kara Cruikshank, Executive Assistant to the Town Manager; Megan Foster, Principal Assessor; Tammi Mickel, Assistant Assessor; Patricia Dufresne, Assistant Finance Director/Town Accountant; Bud Robertson, Finance Committee Chair; Jennifer Moore; Garrett Boles, Board of Assessor Chair; Charlotte Weigel and Phil Francisco, Sustainability members

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Cunningham said the Budget hearing held in Joint Session with the Finance Committee on Saturday, January 27th, was comprehensive. He mentioned all Select Board Members attended. He commended all the Department Heads for providing information on the impacts on their departments if the override fails. Mr. Cunningham encouraged folks to view the meeting on the Groton Channel. Ms. Pine mentioned she had trouble finding the recording. She said you could view the Operating and Capital Budget Review on www.thegrotonchannel.org.

Mr. Haddad reported that the town received a check from the Groton Hill Music Center in the amount of \$16,364 from their Quarter 4, 2023 (October through December 2023) proceeds from the Groton Community Fund. He noted the town had received approximately \$27,000 in PILOT payments this fiscal year and approximately \$65,000 since the beginning of their concert presentations in October 2022.

Mr. Haddad announced they have been working with Wall Street because the town is going out to bond a couple of Water Department projects. The town had its Bond Rating Review with S&P Global's rating agency, and the result was the reaffirmation of the town's AAA Bond Rating, with a stable outlook. Mr. Haddad congratulated the Finance Team on their hard work.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

None

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

- 1. Consider Approving the Intermunicipal Agreement with the Towns of Pepperell and Dunstable for Phase II of the PFAS Solution at the Groton Dunstable Regional High School.**

The Board was provided the final Intermunicipal Agreement with the Towns of Dunstable and Pepperell on Phase II of the PFAS solution at the Groton Dunstable Regional High School. He explained that it had been vetted with Town Counsel, the Water Superintendent Tom Orcutt, and the engineers from Environmental Partners and negotiated by Mr. Haddad, Dunstable Town Administrator Jason Silva, and Pepperell Town Administrator Andrew MacLean. Mr. Haddad respectfully requested that the Board consider approving and authorizing the Town Manager to sign the IMA. (Refer to the IMA included with the minutes).

Ms. Manugian had a question about the first, WHEREAS, on page one of the IMA. She inquired if any properties in Pepperell could benefit from expanding the potable water supply system. Mr. Haddad replied that the pipe would connect to the Jersey Street Plant in Pepperell, and anyone interested in connecting to that line could do so.

Ms. Pine inquired when Phase II would start. Mr. Haddad explained the construction for Phase II cannot begin until it is fully permitted, so approximately two or three years. Phase I would begin immediately.

Ms. Pine had a question regarding Clause 3, which pertains to Pre-Construction Termination, on page 5. Ms. Pine wanted to know how they would obtain approval for the funding. Mr. Haddad explained that the town had already appropriated funding for phases one and two last fall. Ms. Pine then had a question related to Clause 5.5.a., which pertains to Financial Safeguards, on page 10. She asked for clarification on the effective date for receiving a monthly report about the progress of construction and costs associated with Phase 2 West. Mr. Haddad explained that the effective date for receiving the report would be the day they approved the IMA. Mr. Orcutt, the Water Superintendent, said that the monthly reports would involve Pepperell more in obtaining permits than Dunstable and Groton.

Ms. Manugian made a motion to approve and authorize the Town Manager to sign the Intermunicipal Agreement (IMA) with the towns of Dunstable, Pepperell, and Groton for Phase Two. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Orcutt expressed his gratitude to Mr. Haddad for his significant contribution towards the approval of the two Intermunicipal Agreements after a long process.

2. FY 2024 Second Quarter Financial Update

Mr. Haddad wanted to take a few minutes to review the FY 2024 Second Quarter Financial Update. He reported that the Town's finances remain strong regarding Revenues and is a little ahead in overall revenues from last year. He noted the Groton Hill Music Ticket Tax Revenue was approximately \$27,000, but it increased by \$16,000 due to the Quarter 4 payment, which is great news. He said the Country Club continues to perform well, but rental numbers are down slightly. The Revenue coming from the enterprise funds continues to be strong. They are down a bit on licensing and building permit fees. Mr. Haddad mentioned that the investment income was high due to interest rates and money from Florence Roche project. Overall, he was pleased with the revenues, and Groton was in great shape for this fiscal year. Mr. Haddad said department heads continue to do a great job managing their budgets. Ms. Pine asked Mr. Haddad what WC reimbursement was. He was unsure and said he would ask Ms. Patricia Dufresne, the Town Accountant. Finance Committee Chair, Mr. Robertson, asked how the sales were for the Marijuana shop. Mr. Haddad said the facility opened in October, but the shop was not performing as well as they had hoped. He stated the town would be receiving its first check from their percentage of sales next week.

Update on FY 2024 Select Board Goals

Mr. Haddad provided in the packet the following updates on the Select Board Goals for FY 2024:

1. Environmental Contamination: Mr. Haddad said that both Groton and Dunstable voters approved the debt exclusion for the project. The next step was to approve the Phase II IMA, which the Board did that evening. Mr. Haddad said the LSP was looking at the final report from the Environmental Protection Agency regarding the Sportsman Club down by the Center.
2. Climate Change: A workshop on Climate Change and the discussion on the transition to a new General Manager took place on December 4th. The Sustainability Commission also attended. The Light Commission met with the Sustainability Commission to align with them and set future expectations. The Light Commission has said a path forward has been established and said they welcome ideas from everyone and want to ensure sustainable practices are followed. The Sustainability Commission was attending the Select Board meeting that evening to update the Board on the Greenhouse Gas Survey.

Mr. Haddad also said the Town, in conjunction with the cities of Fitchburg and Leominster and the Towns of Pepperell and Ashburnham, has been awarded an MVP Action Grant for planning and developing nature-based solutions to climate change impacts in not only Groton but regionally as well.

3. Master Plan: Mr. Haddad said no new update.

Ms. Pine announced a Community Forum on February 6th at the Center from 2:30-3:30 pm or 7:00-8:00 pm to receive input about where Groton should be headed over the next ten years and how the Town should set priorities. Ms. Pine wants to ensure that the forum is fully advertised to get the most participation possible. Mr. Francisco of the Planning Board said an ad was placed in the Groton Herald, and information has also been posted on the Groton webpage.

4. Reducing Costs of Government: The Fall Town Meeting approved the Charter Change to bring Groton's Budget timeline more in line with the GDRSD Budget timeline. The TREAD Committee has raised funds and is accepting applications from Seniors needing tax relief. The Tri-Comm finished its work and helped develop the FY 2025 Proposed Operating Budget. The Select Board has approved seeking an override of Proposition 2½ to support the proposed FY 2025 Budget. Groton School increased its PILOT by 2½ %. The ticket surcharge at Groton Hill Music has already surpassed the FY 2024 estimate and continues to grow. Mr. Cunningham suggested adding the Patriot RECC Regional Agreement. He would also like to add that the town negotiated for a different health insurance with MIIA.
5. Affordable Housing Trust: The Public Safety Officials attended the December 11th Select Board Meeting to discuss the impact housing projects will have on municipal services. He said they would continue to monitor the projects and determine how best to address the impact, whether working with developers or seeking additional funding to increase staffing. The Zoning Board of Appeals has approved the 500 Main Street Affordable Housing Development. Heritage Landing has scaled back

its proposal to meet local regulations and requirements. The Town has been asked to support a MassWorks Grant to bring water to the Cow Pond Brook Road site. Ms. Pine asked about the Mass Works grant and the financing for it. 100% of the funding for the Taylor Street Grant came from the State.

Mr. Haddad said affordable housing remains a high priority in the town. Ms. Pine added that it is a frustrating, slow process.

6. Diversity Equity and Inclusion: The DEI Committee has been invited to the February 5th Select Board Meeting.

Ms. Pine would like to update the Goal that the Conservation Commission approved the request to name parcel 232-56, Nipmuc Meadows.

7. Town-wide Examination of Traffic-Patterns, Speed Limits, Road Designs, Etc. The Police Department and DPW attended the December 11th Select Board Meeting to address this and other issues. He said they have been working with the potential new owner of the former Light Department to get the unpaved road between Station Avenue and Broadmeadow opened to the public again. In conjunction with the Cities of Fitchburg and Leominster and the Towns of Pepperell and Ashburnham, the Town has been awarded an MVP Grant for Planning and developing nature-based solutions.

Mr. Haddad believed they were progressing well going into the second quarter Goals.

3. FY 2025 Budget Update

Mr. Cunningham said he wanted to set up a Legislative Workshop with the Dunstable and Groton Select Boards, Senator Cronin and Kennedy Representative Scarsdale and Sena, Superintendent Chesson, Chair Raynor, and Town Administrator Silva to discuss the difficult year the Towns of Groton and Dunstable and the Groton Dunstable Regional School District are facing in FY 2025. Also, to see what assistance the State can provide to help address this challenging year. Mr. Haddad said he would contact Town Administrator Jason Silva to set up a State Budget Forum.

Mr. Robertson expressed his concern that a few things were not explained well during the budget meeting held on Saturday. He said the focus was primarily on the Fiscal Year 2025, but if the override isn't passed, the problem would be more severe. He felt it was necessary to explain the cuts that would take place in the second and third years. Mr. Robertson believes that people do not fully understand the severity of the situation. The next Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for February 6th. Mr. Haddad will work on addressing Mr. Robertsons concerns by providing a list of cuts for the second and third years.

Update on Select Board Meeting Schedule Through the 2024 Spring Town Meeting

Monday, February 5, 2024	DEI Committee Update
Monday, February 12, 2024	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, February 19, 2024	No Meeting- Presidents Day Holiday
Monday, February 26, 2024	Public Hearing on the Warrant- Held at Groton Center
Tuesday, February 27, 2024	Special Budget Forum- Swallow Union Elementary School
Monday, March 4, 2024	Issue Warrant for Town Meeting- REMOTE MEETING
Wednesday, March 6, 2024	Special Budget Forum- Groton (Senior Center)
Monday, March 11, 2024	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, March 18, 2024	No Meeting
Monday, March 25, 2024	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, March 26, 2024	2024 Spring Town Meeting
Monday, April 1, 2024	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Tuesday, April 2, 2024	Special Election to Consider an Override of Proposition 2 1//2
Monday, April 8, 2024	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, April 15, 2024	No Meeting- Patriots Day
Monday, April 22, 2024	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Tuesday, April 23, 2024	Annual Town Election

ITEMS FOR SELECT BOARD CONSIDERATION AND ACTION

- 1. Consider Approving a One-Day Wine and Malt Beverage License for the Groton Conservation Trust for the Groton Conservation Forum to be held at the Groton Center on Thursday, February 15, 2024, from 7:00 pm- 9:00 pm.**

The agenda item was requested to be withdrawn by the applicant.

- 2. Update on the Nashua River Walk- Accessible Trail**

Mr. Cunningham provided an update on the Nashua River Walk Project. He discussed the challenges faced by the project at the state level, particularly related to providing an accessible trail. Mr. Cunningham mentioned that the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) has a threshold that must be met for any project to go forward, which has been challenging. He said he was working with Mr. Paul Funch and the Commissioner of DCR to overcome these challenges. Mr. Cunningham also commended Mr. Funch for his contribution to the project. He told the Board that he would inform them of any progress.

6:15 P.M. IN JOINT SESSION WITH THE BOARD OF ASSESSORS- CONSIDER FILLING THE VACANCY ON THE BOARD OF ASSESSORS UNTIL THE NEXT ELECTION

Mr. Garrett Boles, the Chair of the Board of Assessors, was in attendance.

Mr. Haddad explained there was a vacancy on the Groton Board of Assessors. He said the vacancy was advertised, and they received two Committee Interest Forms. The Board of Assessors interviewed both applicants on Friday, January 26, 2024. After deliberation, the Assessors unanimously recommended that Jennifer Moore be appointed to fill the vacancy until the next election on April 23rd, 2023. Ms. Moore attended the meeting and expressed her pleasure in meeting everyone. She mentioned she had lived in

Groton for two years and is excited to be involved with the Assessors. In addition, she has also pulled nomination papers to run for the vacant seat.

Ms. Pine moved to appoint Jennifer Moore to the Board of Assessors until the April 23, 2024, Annual Town Election. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. Role call: Pine-aye; Manugian-aye; Cunningham-aye; Pisani- aye; Boles- aye.

Mr. Haddad left the meeting to attend a CPC (Community Planning Committee) meeting.

6:30 P.M. SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION- COMMITTEE UPDATE-GREEN HOUSE GAS SURVEY- NEXT STEPS

Mr. Phil Francisco and Ms. Charlotte Weigel were in attendance with a PowerPoint presentation.

The PowerPoint presentation provided a summary of the town-wide GHG (greenhouse gas) inventory, reviewed the Climate Change Goals of the Select Board, discussed the changing landscape of incentives for reducing emissions, suggested the use of the state framework for incentives to achieve town decarbonization, highlighted the energy coaching program, mention the available planning grants, and finally, requested support from the Select Board (Please refer to the PowerPoint presentation that is included with these minutes).

The Sustainability Commission has formed an Energy Coaching Working Group. They have suggested that the endorsement, promotion, and participation of GELD and Town Leadership would help to ensure success. The Working Group will primarily focus on heat pump coaching and initially train two coaches through the HeatSmart Alliance (they currently have one). Additionally, the group will evaluate potential options for a partnership with Adobe. Mr. Francisco and Ms. Weigel said the Sustainability Commission would like to ask for the Select Board's support and consider having the Working Group report to the Select Board. Ms. Pine thought it was a great idea but said from the Town side that they needed to consider liability. Ms. Weigel stated she had completed basic training and was covered by their Heat Smart Alliance Liability waiver.

Chair Cunningham left the meeting to attend the CPC Meeting.

Mr. Francisco mentioned the availability of grants for planning and grant writers. Ms. Manugian expressed concerns about the required work required once they receive the grant. Mr. Francisco said they need to start thinking about drafting a climate resolution for the Town. He suggested forming a Climate Action Plan Working Group to push the idea forward. The Working Group would consist of members from the Select Board and the Sustainability Commission. Ms. Pine said she thought it would be wonderful if some of the Sustainability Commission Public Programs brought out a volunteer to help with the workload. She would like to move forward with the Energy Coaching Program. Mr. Pisani said he appreciates their approach to being realistic and has attended several of their seminars. Ms. Manugian suggested that the Board compile their questions regarding the program's implementation and planning and forward them to Mr. Haddad, who could share them with the Sustainability Commission.

The Board members thanked the Sustainability Commission for their presentation that evening.

OTHER BUSINESS

ON-GOING ISSUES

None

Approval of Minutes from January 22, 2024

Ms. Pine made a motion to approve the minutes of the regularly scheduled meeting from January 22, 2024, as amended. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

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