



TOWN OF GROTON
173 Main Street
Groton, Massachusetts 01450-1237
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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 26, 2024
AGENDA
GROTON CENTER
163 WEST MAIN STREET, WEST GROTON, MA

- 6:30 P.M. Announcements and Review Agenda for the Public – Announce Groton Reads 2024
- 6:35 P.M. Public Comment Period
- I. 6:36 P.M. Town Manager’s Report
1. Consider Ratifying the Town Manager’s Appointment of Jodee Coke as Animal Inspector
 2. FY 2025 Budget Update
 3. Update on Select Board Schedule through the 2024 Spring Town Meeting
- II. 6:40 P.M. Items for Select Board Consideration and Action
1. Consider Appointing Molly Foster and Gregg Baker as Associate Members of the Zoning Board of Appeals
 2. Consider Approving a Memorandum of Understanding for Communities in the First Middlesex District concerning Economic and Development Collaborative
 3. Review Start Time of Select Board Meetings and Determine if it will Remain at 6:00 p.m. or Return to 7:00 p.m.
- III. 7:00 P.M. In Joint Session with the Finance Committee – Public Hearing on the Various Articles Contained in the Warrant for the 2024 Spring Town Meeting

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

SELECT BOARD LIAISON REPORTS

- IV. Minutes: Regularly Scheduled Meeting of February 12, 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.

To: *Select Board*

From: *Mark W. Haddad – Town Manager*

Subject: *Weekly Agenda Update/Report*

Date: *February 26, 2024*

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Please note that Monday's meeting will be held at the Groton Center, 163 West Main Street, and begin at 6:30 p.m. 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 Board will be meeting in joint session with members of the Finance Committee for the purpose of conducting the Public Hearing on the Articles contained in the 2024 Spring Town Meeting Warrant. Enclosed with this Report is the latest Draft of the Warrant that has been reviewed and approved by Town Counsel and includes the Budget Message from the Town Manager and Finance Committee, along with the Budget that will be proposed to the Town Meeting by the Finance Committee. At the conclusion of the hearing, if the Board is so inclined, I would ask you to consider taking positions on the various Articles.

1. After many years of dedicated service to the Town of Groton, George Moore has decided to retire as the Animal Inspector for the Town of Groton. I cannot thank George enough for all he has done for the Town. For the 15+ years I have served as Town Manager, George has been a trusted advisor and dedicated official. I wish him the best in his retirement. That said, I have appointed Jodee Coke of Groton as Animal Inspector. I would respectfully request that the Select Board consider ratifying this appointment at Monday's meeting.
2. With regard to the FY 2025 Budget Update, please note that we will be holding the first of two budget forums at the Swallow Union School in Dunstable on Tuesday, February 27, 2024 beginning at 7:00 p.m. In addition, with the excellent assistance and input from Select Board Member Pine, I have drafted an Override Fact Sheet that we have posted on the Town's website and provided copies for the Public at the Town Clerk's Office, Groton Public Library and the Groton Center. I have enclosed a copy of the Fact Sheet with his Report for your review.

Select Board
Weekly Agenda Update/Report
February 26, 2024
page two

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

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. The Zoning Board of Appeals has requested that the Board appoint Molly Foster and Gregg Baker as Associate Members of the Board. I would respectfully request that the Board consider making these appointments at Monday’s meeting with a term to expire on June 30, 2024.
2. Representative Margaret Scarsdale has been working with her District Towns to improve economic development in the District. To that end, after several meetings, representatives from the various Towns, including Peter Cunningham and Greg Sheldon from Groton, have drafted a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that would create an Economic Development Collaborative. I have attached a copy of the MOU with this Report for your review and consideration. I would respectfully request that you consider approving this MOU at Monday’s meeting.
3. When the Select Board voted last November to change the start time of Select Board Meetings to 6:00 p.m., it was determined to review this decision after three (3) months. February 26th is the three month mark. I have set aside time on the Agenda for the Board to review this issue and make a final determination on the start time of meetings. We can discuss this in more detail at Monday’s meeting.

MWH/rjb
enclosures

**LEGAL NOTICE
TOWN OF GROTON
PUBLIC HEARING**

The Select Board has scheduled a joint public hearing with the Finance Committee for Monday, February 26, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. at the Groton Center, Community Room, 163 West Main Street, West Groton, MA. The purpose of the hearing will be to discuss the Articles contained in the March 26, 2024 Spring Town Meeting Warrant.

All interested parties are encouraged to attend.

SELECT BOARD

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

Groton Herald
February 16, 2024
February 23, 2024

Warrant, Summary, and Recommendations

TOWN OF GROTON



2024 SPRING TOWN MEETING

Groton-Dunstable Middle School Auditorium
344 Main Street, Groton, Massachusetts 01450

Beginning Tuesday, March 26, 2024 @ 7:00 PM

Attention – Voters and Taxpayers

Please bring this Report to Town Meeting

***THE BUDGET HANDOUT FOR ARTICLE 5 IS AVAILABLE
IN THE BACK OF THE WARRANT***

Introduction to Groton Town Meeting

Voters are familiar with casting ballots in local and state elections, but they have another important civic duty in towns, the Town Meeting.

What is Town Meeting?

The Town Meeting is the legislative body in the town form of government in Massachusetts. Town Meeting is a formal gathering of registered voters who propose, debate and vote on measures. Groton holds at least two Town Meetings per year.

What is a warrant?

The warrant is the official notice to voters that a Town Meeting is scheduled. The warrant includes the date, time, location and a description of each subject to be acted on at Town Meeting. In Groton, the warrant must be posted in two public places and mailed to each household 14 days in advance of Town Meeting. “The warrant must contain a sufficient description of what is proposed so as to constitute an adequate warning to all the inhabitants of the town.”¹ “Every action taken at the meeting must be pursuant to some article in the warrant and must be within the scope of such article.”²

How does Town Meeting proceed?

Voters attending Town Meeting must first check in with the clerks and receive an electronic voting handset which is required to vote. The meeting typically acts on the articles in the order that they are printed in the warrant. For each article, a main motion is made and seconded by voters and placed by the moderator on the floor for debate. Permission of the moderator is required to speak. The moderator presides and regulates the proceedings, decides all questions of order, and calls and declares all votes. After debate has ended, the moderator will call for a vote by use of the electronic voting handset. Please see page 3 of this Warrant for a full explanation of how Electronic Voting will work at Town Meeting.

Who can attend?

¹ *Town Meeting Time: A Handbook of Parliamentary Law* (page 12) Johnson, Trustman and Wadsworth, Third Edition, 2001.

² *Id.*

Town Meeting is open to the public. Only Groton voters are entitled to attend, speak and vote. Non-voters may be required to sit in a separate section. Non-voters may ask the moderator to speak on the topic of the debate.

How long is town meeting?

Town Meeting concludes when all articles on the warrant have been acted upon. Town Meeting may conclude in one session or adjourn for subsequent sessions.

Explanation of a Consent Agenda

A consent agenda is a procedure to group multiple main motions into a single motion for voting. A consent agenda saves time by eliminating the reading of multiple motions and explanations when there are no objections or questions. In Groton, a consent agenda generally consists of articles unanimously supported by the Select Board and Finance Committee. Articles that change by-laws or introduce new spending are typically not included. In this warrant, the Select Board has grouped articles in consent agendas and labeled them for easy reference.

How Consent Agendas Work

As the first step to act on a consent agenda, the moderator will read the titles of the included articles. A voter who wishes to remove an article from the consent agenda for separate debate and vote should state “hold.” The held article will be set aside and acted on after the vote on the consent agenda. After the meeting agrees on the contents of the consent agenda, there will be no debate and the moderator will immediately call for a vote. Every motion included in the consent agenda will either pass or fail as a group. Voters should read the warrant and review the proposed consent agendas to identify articles they wish to remove for separate consideration.

Electronic Voting at Town Meeting



Voting at Town Meeting will be conducted using an electronic voting system purchased by the Town of Groton as authorized by Town Meeting in October, 2022. Instead of using placards to be raised and counted, voters will use wireless handsets to cast their vote quickly, accurately and privately.

Voter Check-In

At check-in, voters will be given a handset. No record is made of which voter receives which handset. All handsets will be tested prior to the meeting. Voters physically unable to use a handset will be seated in a manual-count section and their votes will be counted by tellers. For those with visual impairments, large handsets with braille are available.

Test Vote

At the beginning of the meeting, the Moderator will conduct a test vote to get everyone comfortable with the voting procedures.

Proxy Voting Prohibited

The handset given to a voter at check-in is for the exclusive use of that voter. Voting with a handset that has been issued to another individual is strictly forbidden.

Voting

When the Moderator announces it is time to vote:

- Press 1A (green button) for YES →
- Press 2B (red button) for No →
- If you wish to not vote, press no buttons

Handset Display



The display on the handset:

- OK means the system receiver has received your vote
- A "1" for Yes or "2" for No shows the vote the system received.
- The small "R" at the top of the screen indicates the handset is communicating with the receiver
- The icons in the top left indicate the WiFi signal strength.

Help Desk

A Help Desk will be able to assist voters who have trouble with using the handset. If a handset malfunctions, a voter will receive a new handset.

Handset Return

If you leave the meeting temporarily, please keep the handset with you. If the meeting ends or you leave, return the handset to the check-in table.



Town Meeting Access for Voters with Disabilities

Parking – Universally accessible parking spaces are available in the parking lot in front of the Groton Dunstable Middle School South. There is a ramp providing access from the parking lot to the front door of the Middle School.

Wheelchair Accessible & Companion Seating – Wheelchair spaces, seating for people with mobility issues and companion seats are available in the center aisle on both sides of the auditorium.

Sign Language – A Sign Language Interpreter will be provided for the hearing impaired, upon request, at least one week prior to the meeting.

Speaking at Town Meeting – There will be volunteers available to bring hand-held microphones to voters who have mobility issues or cannot stand in line and wait at the microphones.

Restrooms – Accessible restrooms are available near the entrance to the auditorium.

Transportation to Town Meeting - The Council on Aging van will be available to Groton residents attending Town Meetings at no charge. All riders will be at the meeting prior to the start. The van is wheelchair accessible. Your reservation can be made by calling the Senior Center at 978-448-1170. Seats will be filled on a first come, first serve basis.

Questions or concerns - If you or a member of your household has questions or would like to request a sign language interpreter, please contact the Select Board's Office at Town Hall at 978 448-1111 at least one week before the Town Meeting.

**SPRING TOWN MEETING WARRANT
MARCH 26, 2024**

Middlesex, ss.
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
To any Constable in the Town of Groton

Greetings:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are hereby required to notify and warn said inhabitants of the Town of Groton qualified to vote on Town affairs to assemble in the Groton-Dunstable Middle School Auditorium in said Town on Tuesday, the twenty-sixth day of March, 2024 at Seven O'clock in the evening, to consider all business other than the election of Town Officers and on the twenty-third day of April, 2024, between the hours of 7:00 A.M. and 8:00 P.M., at an adjourned session thereof at the following locations:

Precinct 1	The Groton Center 163 West Main Street	Precincts 2 & 3 Middle School South Gymnasium 344 Main Street
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to give their ballots for:

Vote for One	Board of Assessors	3 Years
Vote for One	Board of Health	3 Years
Vote for One	Select Board	3 Years
Vote for One	Commissioner of Trust Funds	3 Years
Vote for Two	Groton-Dunstable Regional School Committee	3 Years
Vote for One	Groton Electric Light Commission	3 Years
Vote for One	Moderator	3 Years
Vote for One	Park Commission	3 Years
Vote for One	Park Commission	1 Year
Vote for Three	Planning Board	3 Years
Vote for One	Sewer Commission	3 Years
Vote for Two	Trustees of the Groton Public Library	3 Years
Vote for One	Trustee of the Groton Public Library	1 Year
Vote for One	Water Commission	3 Years
Vote for One	Groton Housing Authority	5 Years
Vote for One	Groton Housing Authority	4 Years

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*Will be presented as one Consent Motion

**CPA Funding Recommendations will be presented as One Consent Motion

***Annual Consent Agenda. To be presented as one Motion

Article 1: Hear Reports

To see if the Town will vote to hear and act on the report of the Select Board and other Town Officers and Committees, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Select Board

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: *To hear reports of Town Boards, Committees and Commissions and to accept the annual report and other reports that may be presented to Town Meeting.*

Article 2: Elected Officials Compensation

To see if the Town will vote to set the compensation for the elected officials of the Town for the ensuing year, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: *To provide compensation for elected officials as proposed by the Town Manager. The Town Moderator is proposed to receive a salary of \$1,000 in FY 2025.*

Article 3: Wage and Classification Schedule

To see if the Town will vote to amend and adopt for Fiscal Year 2025 the Town of Groton Wage and Classification schedule as shown in Appendix B of this Warrant, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Select Board
Town Manager

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: *The purpose of this Article is to set the wage and classification schedule for the three (3) employees (Executive Assistant to the Town Manager, Human Resources Director and IT Director) covered by the Personnel Bylaw. Under the policy of the Select Board, these employees receive the same benefits as contained in the Town Supervisors' Union Contract. These employees will receive a 2% cost-of-living adjustment in Fiscal Year 2025.*

Article 4: *Appropriate FY 2025 Contribution to the OPEB Trust*

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, and/or borrow pursuant to any applicable statute, a sum or sums of money, to be expended by the Town Manager, to be added to the Other Post-Employment Benefits Liability Trust Fund as authorized by Chapter 32B, Section 20, of the Massachusetts General Laws, or to take any other action relative thereto.

***Select Board
Town Manager***

**Select Board:
Finance Committee:**

Summary: *The purpose of this article is to fund the Town's OPEB Liability. The Select Board and Finance Committee have adopted a funding policy for this purpose. One of the funding goals is to commit to an annual appropriation to the Trust that would keep the Net Present Value Liability from growing until such time as the Town can begin to pay down the liability. In Fiscal Year 2025, the anticipated amount necessary for this purpose is estimated to be \$185,000. This Article will seek an appropriation of \$185,000 from Free Cash to add to the OPEB Liability Trust Fund.*

Article 5: *Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Operating Budget*

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, and/or borrow pursuant to any applicable statute, a sum or sums of money as may be necessary to defray the expenses of the Town for the next Fiscal Year (2025), and act upon the budget of the Finance Committee, or to take any other action relative thereto.

***Finance Committee
Select Board
Town Manager***

**Select Board:
Finance Committee:**

Summary: *In accordance with Section 6 of the Town Charter, the Finance Committee conducts its annual budget process by receiving the Town Manager’s proposed balanced budget on or before December 31st; meeting with department heads and boards; holding public budget hearings in preparation for issuing its recommendations to Town Meeting; and presenting its budget recommendations at the Spring Town Meeting. The budget handout for this Article is contained in Appendix A of this Warrant. Please also see the Finance Committee’s and Town Manager’s Report which includes the Finance Committee’s and Select Board’s recommendations.*

Article 6: Fiscal Year 2025 Capital Budget

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, and/or borrow pursuant to any applicable statute, a sum or sums of money, to be expended by the Town Manager in Fiscal Year 2024 and thereafter, for the purpose of funding the Fiscal Year 2025 Capital Budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Summary: *The following is the proposed Town Manager’s Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2025:*

Item #1 – Extrication Tools – “Jaws of Life” \$92,500 Fire and EMS

Summary: *The current auto extrication tools “Jaws of Life” are approaching 15 years old. With a life expectancy of 10-15 years, these tools are at the tail end of their serviceable time which will require replacement. As the new car technologies and materials constantly evolve, older “jaws” simply do not have the power to cut some modern systems. These tools are primarily used for motor vehicle crashes, however, have applicable usages in the industrial or construction setting.*

**Select Board:
Finance Committee:**

Item #2 – Pick-Up Truck \$55,000 Highway

Summary: *This is a scheduled replacement. The average life of a pick-up truck is approximately 7 years. By replacing one vehicle every couple of years, this will allow the fleet to stay in good shape. They are front line pick-ups used for day to day operations as well as snow plowing.*

**Select Board:
Finance Committee:**

Item #3 – Brush Mower/Field Mower **\$70,000** **Highway**

Summary: *This item is scheduled for replacement while it still has value. This should be considered a scheduled replacement.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Item #4 – Dump Truck **\$285,000** **Highway**

Summary: *This item is a scheduled replacement. These vehicles are front line trucks responsible for plowing and sanding, as well as normal construction duties. The Town will borrow this amount of money and pay it off over five years.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Item #5 – IT Infrastructure **\$40,000** **Town Facilities**

Summary: *This item in the Capital Budget was established twelve years ago and has been very successful. In Fiscal Year 2025, the following items will be purchased/upgraded with this allocation: 10 replacement computers; Replace aging servers and storage arrays; Investment to expand the network and keep equipment and maintenance costs current; and network switch upgrades and increased wireless coverage and improve door lock and security system maintenance.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Item #6 – Municipal Building Repairs **\$25,000** **Town Facilities**

Summary: *This appropriation will be used to continue to maintain all municipal buildings by performing various maintenance activities to prevent major breakdowns in our municipal building infrastructure. Priorities continue to change when it comes to the minor repairs and upgrades in the Town's buildings. With a set line item which is separate from minor capital, the DPW can be flexible and change its priorities instead of just doing it because it is on a list. Furnaces, a/c units, flooring and painting are some of the small items this capital program could handle with the flexibility needed.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Item #7 – Police Station HVAC

\$65,000

Town Facilities

Summary: *The current HVAC System at the Police Station is the original system from when the Building was constructed in 1999. In 2025 it will be almost 25 years old and in need of replacement. This should be considered a scheduled replacement.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Item #8 – Baler/Maintenance

\$25,000

Transfer Station

Summary: *Due to a fire at the Transfer Station in June, 2021, the 2004 baler was replaced by a newer model with insurance funding. This has now allowed the Town to remove the purchase of a new baler from the capital plan. The money set aside for the baler in FY 2025 will be spent to overhaul and update the newer baler providing for a longer life and not require the Town to replace it for several more years.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Item #9 – Library

\$50,000

Library

Summary: *All 20-year-old carpeting was replaced in 2018 EXCEPT in the Children's Room and Main Meeting Rooms, because they were already replaced in 2009. But these three large spaces are the busiest, most-used, and most stain-prone rooms. In FY2025, these carpets will be 15 years old (expected life 10 years). Carpet squares cost a bit more than broadloom, but make the most sense in such high traffic, high spill, highly busy crafting/activity/refreshment/programming meeting spaces. Despite regular cleaning, stains are visible all over the meeting rooms in particular. Carpet tiles can be replaced easily if stains cannot be removed or if fixed shelving or furniture is changed.*

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Item #10 – Property Improvements

\$50,000

Park Department

Summary: *The Park Commission has been working over the past several years developing a strategy to address deficiencies in the various Park Department Properties located throughout Groton. Since FY 2015, the Town has appropriated \$25,000 each year so that the Park Commission can develop a capital improvement program that will allow them to keep our various park locations in good shape and avoid a major construction project to much success. In FY 2025, the Park Commission has requested \$50,000 to deal with some substantial capital expenditures, including the Cow Pond Pump House coming in at a total expense of \$20,000-\$34,000. Another significant capital project is the paving work needed at Carol Wheeler Park, which has been quoted at \$11,500-\$11,900.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Item #11 – Police Cruisers

\$133,025

Police Department

Summary: *Purchase of two police cruisers and related equipment to replace cruisers that are no longer cost effective to maintain. This allows for lesser mileage per year, better maintenance scheduling, assignment of cars to officers and for a programmed replacement schedule that ensures line cars are rotated out at reasonable mileage and wear. Unmarked cars are rotated in the same fashion.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Item #12 – Police Pick-Up Truck

\$77,000

Police Department

Summary: *This piece of equipment will benefit the department in that, as a multi-purpose vehicle with a four wheel drive platform, it can be utilized for snow removal, specialized equipment transport, provide accessibility to remote areas, and it will give us the ability to evacuate people in emergencies. Also can be used to assist Emergency Management with transportation of generators and shelter equipment.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Item #13 – Electronic Control Devices – “Tasers” \$13,475 Police Department

Summary: *Current Electronic Control Devices are at end-of-life and not serviceable. The total cost of the ECD replacement is \$99,978. The Police Department applied for and received a JAG grant in the amount of \$45,000. The Town would be responsible for 4 payments of \$13,745 (beginning in FY 2025) for a total cost to the Town of for a total cost to the town of \$53,900.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Item #14 – Golf Carts \$25,553 Country Club

Summary: *In FY 2023, the Town replaced the fleet of twenty-five golf carts with new 21 Yamaha gas powered carts and four Yamaha electric carts using a five year lease to purchase agreement at an annual cost of approximately \$25,000.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Item #15 – Greens Equipment - Ventrac \$10,918 Country Club

Summary: *The Country Club needs to replace its aging equipment. Some pieces age better than others and the Club attempts to use all the equipment until repairing it becomes cost prohibitive. The greens superintendent and course mechanic will determine the items needed most.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Item #16 – Greens Equipment – Hauler Pro X \$20,000 Country Club

Summary: *A superintendent utility cart is needed to replace one of the carts that is currently used for maintenance activities. The current carts are over a decade old and are becoming unreliable.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Item #17 – Greens Equipment – Truckster XD \$13,500 Country Club

Summary: *A heavy payload 4x4 utility cart that will allow the course maintenance staff to transfer up to 3,500 lbs. of debris, sand, loom to areas of the course.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Item #18 – Ventrac Attachments**\$18,000****Country Club**

Summary: *The Ventrac unit is an attachment driven unit. The following attachments would be very useful for maintenance on the course. Stump Grinder – Focusing on clearing out dead trees and overgrown areas of the course. The stump grinder will allow maintenance staff to remove enough stump to clear the area and in some cases reseed. Tough Cut Deck – This deck will allow maintenance staff to cut back all the overgrown areas of the course. Trencher – This attachment will allow maintenance staff to install new irrigation lines on the course.*

Select Board:**Finance Committee:****Item #19 – Greens Equipment – Greens Mower****\$10,000****Country Club**

Summary: *This item will replace the current greens mower. The Old mower will be converted to a tee & collar unit, and the old tee & collar unit will be converted to a greens roller unit. Ideally, the Club will purchase a new mower every five years.*

Select Board:**Finance Committee:****Item #20 – HVAC****\$23,000****Country Club**

Summary: *The Club has been installing one AC unit per year into the Function Hall and Tavern Building. This request will complete the process of ultimately having five (5) units in the Function Hall and two (2) units in the Tavern Building.*

Select Board:**Finance Committee:****Item #21 – Building Repairs & Painting****\$20,000****Country Club**

Summary: *This funding will be used to paint the exterior of the Golf Shop, replace trim board, and install rubber flooring for the high traffic area inside the golf shop. In addition, it will also be used to replace the deck outside of the Golf Shop.*

Select Board:**Finance Committee:**

Item #22 – Function Hall Bathroom Repairs \$10,000 Country Club

Summary: *This funding will be used to install hand driers in the Function Hall bathrooms, as well as repaint both bathrooms in the Function hall, and replace the partitions in the Function Hall bathrooms.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Item #23 – Retaining Walls \$15,000 Country Club

Summary: *Using the same blocks that were installed several years ago for the pool perimeter, the Country Club will replace the stone wall next to the deck at the Tavern Building and add a small section that has been experiencing washout next to the Tavern Building.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Town Manager

Article 7: *Revoke Cable Enterprise Fund in Fiscal Year 2025*

To see if the Town will revoke the provisions of Chapter 44, §53F½ of the Massachusetts General Laws, ceasing the Community Cable Department as an enterprise fund effective in Fiscal Year 2025, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: *At the 2015 Spring Town Meeting, the Town voted to create a Cable Enterprise Fund for Fiscal Year 2016. At the time, Cable Revenues were strong and had a healthy level of reserves. However, since 2019, more residents have moved away from cable to the various streaming services and the Town has seen a steady decrease in Cable Fees and the Cable Enterprise has had to depend more on its Excess and Deficiency Account to balance the budget. There are no longer enough reserves to continue functioning as an Enterprise. To address this and determine the best course of action to continue to provide Local Cable Access while dealing with the loss of revenues, in Fiscal Year 2025, the Town will create a “Cable Department Receipts Reserved for Appropriation Fund”. Creation of this fund, similar to the Ambulance Receipts Reserved for Appropriation Fund, will allow the Town to collect the fees received from the two cable carriers servicing Groton and put them in this Reserve Account for the exclusive use of the Local Cable Access Department. This Article will revoke the Enterprise Fund. Article 8 will create the Receipts Reserved for Appropriation Fund.*

Article 8: PEG Access and Cable Related Fund Acceptance

To see if the Town will accept Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, §53F¾, to establish a special revenue fund known as the PEG Access and Cable Related Fund, to reserve cable franchise fees and other cable-related revenues for appropriation to support PEG access services and oversight and renewal of the cable franchise agreement, said fund to begin operation for Fiscal Year 2025, which begins on July 1, 2024, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: See explanation in the Article 7 Summary.

Article 9: Funding for Destination Groton Committee

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, and/or borrow pursuant to any applicable statute, a sum or sums of money, to be expended by the Town Manager in Fiscal Year 2024 and thereafter, for the purpose of providing funding for the Destination Groton Committee to carry out the Charge of the Committee and all costs associated and related thereto, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Destination Groton Committee

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: *The purpose of this Article is to provide funding for the Destination Groton Committee to carry out its charge, which is to pursue a course of action intended to engage all Town stakeholders, including the business and non-profit communities, Town leaders, and Town residents in a series of public information forums in order to prepare for an increase in visitors to town while at the same time work to preserve its rural small-town charm. A portion of this funding will be used to hire consultants to assist in procuring grant funding to create tourism programming, strategic marketing, infrastructure and regional transportation mitigation.*

Article 10: Funding for Sustainability Commission

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, and/or borrow pursuant to any applicable statute, a sum or sums of money, to be expended by the Town Manager, for the purpose of providing funding for the Sustainability Commission to carry out the

Charge of the Committee and all cost associated and related thereto, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Sustainability Commission

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: *The purpose of this Article is to provide funding for the Sustainability Commission to pay for their tire recycling program, climate action program, pollinator garden program, building and delivering trained energy coaching and a central, online repository of information for townspeople, Sustainable Groton Advocates citizens' program, and to provide educational materials to residents in their endeavor to have informational/educational seminars that focus on Sustainability. At the direction of the Select Board in October, 2021, the Sustainability Commission added climate change and resilience to their purview. Beginning in 2022, the Commission added climate change work projects and a tire recycling program to their ongoing pollinator garden program. Continuing and bringing these projects to fruition requires funding. The Commission is seeking \$9,600 for the above-mentioned activities in FY 2025.*

Article 11: Community Preservation Funding Accounts

To see if the Town will vote to make the following appropriations from the Community Preservation Fund: Allocation of Community Preservation Funds to the following sub accounts:

CPC Operating Expenses:	\$ 22,500
Open Space Reserve:	\$106,250
Historic Resource Reserve:	\$106,250
Community Housing Reserve:	\$106,250
Unallocated Reserve:	\$721,250

or to take any other action relative thereto.

Community Preservation Committee

Select Board:
Finance Committee:
Community Preservation Committee:

Summary: *This is an accounting procedure that is necessary so that the Community Preservation Committee will have access to the funds raised during Fiscal Year 2025. Except for the CPC Operating Expenses, none of these funds will be spent without additional approval at Town Meeting.*

Article 12: Community Preservation Funding Recommendations

To see if the Town will vote to adopt and approve the recommendations of the Community Preservation Committee for Fiscal Year 2025, and vote to implement such recommendations by appropriating a sum or sums of money from the Community Preservation Fund established pursuant to Chapter 44B of the Massachusetts General Laws, and by authorizing the Select Board, with the approval of the Community Preservation Committee, to acquire, by purchase, gift or eminent domain, such real property interests in the name of the Town, or enforceable by the Town, including real property interests in the form of permanent affordable housing restrictions and historical preservation restrictions that will meet the requirements of Chapter 184 of the Massachusetts General Laws, as may be necessary or proper to carry out the foregoing, or to take any other action relative thereto.

CPC Proposal A: Conservation Fund – FY 2025 \$400,000

Summary: *The Conservation Commission is requesting \$400,000 to be added to Groton’s Conservation Fund in order to preserve land for open space, agricultural recreation, and forestry activities, as well as to protect water resources and wildlife habitat. The Conservation Fund allows the Town to move quickly when a priority parcel becomes available. In the past, the Conservation Fund has been used to purchase conservation restrictions, agricultural preservation restrictions, and fee ownership of conservation land within Groton. To Fund this Project, \$100,000 will come from the Open Space Reserve and \$300,000 to come from the Unallocated Reserve.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee:
Community Preservation Committee:

CPC Proposal B: Cow Pond Play Fields \$30,000

Summary: *The Park Commission is requesting \$30,000 to design a master plan for the large area owned by the Town of Groton between Cow Pond Brook Road and Hoyts Wharf Road. The area is currently used by athletic groups and residents. This proposal will utilize the data and site assessments conducted using previously approved CPA funds in 2022 and build upon it to create the Master Plan and concept design. The Park Commission will also incorporate input provided through a survey of Town residents. The full amount to be paid from the Unallocated Reserve.*

Select Board:
Finance Committee:
Community Preservation Committee:

CPC Proposal C: Milestone Markers Restoration \$10,000

Summary: *The Groton Historical Commission is requesting \$10,000 to restore 2 of the 27 milestone markers that radiate from Main Street, leading to the Town center. The stones are historical assets, having been installed in approximately 1902. The project will fund the necessary restoration of damaged milestone markers. The full amount to be paid from the Historic Reserve.*

- Select Board:**
- Finance Committee:**
- Community Preservation Committee:**

CPC Proposal D: Sustainable Groton Funding \$2,400

Summary: *The Sustainability Commission is requesting \$2,400 in order to create and plant a native plant pollinator corridor along the back of the Groton Center property. The 80-foot-long planting pathway will connect the pollinator garden to the Ice Line Trail. The pollinator corridor will consist of a pedestrian walkway with a boarder of native pollinator plants and benches. The pollinator habitats at the Groton Center help to offset the loss of habitat and support sustainable environments, contributing to biodiversity. The full amount to be paid from the Open Space Reserve.*

- Select Board:**
- Finance Committee:**
- Community Preservation Committee:**

CPC Proposal E: Prescott School Building Assessment \$100,000

Summary: *The Groton Town Manager, in conjunction with the Capital Planning Advisory Committee and the Friends of Prescott, are proposing to perform a building condition assessment report for the Prescott School, located at 145 Main Street, to determine the functional adequacy of the primary facilities in the short- and long-term future to preserve the historic structure. The full amount to be paid from the Historic Reserve.*

- Select Board:**
- Finance Committee:**
- Community Preservation Committee:**

CPC Proposal F: Outdoor Fitness Court \$237,500

Summary: *In the Spring of 2023, the Town of Groton applied for and received a \$50,000 2024 Blue Cross Blue Shield Massachusetts Fitness Campaign Grant Award. This Campaign is part of a national movement to make world-class fitness free and accessible in public spaces across the country. The National Fitness Campaign (NFC) is a for-profit wellness consulting firm. NFC's mission is to make "world class fitness free" to support healthy communities across America. This grant provides seed funding for the construction/installation of an Outdoor Fitness Court. Working cooperatively with the Groton Park Commission, it was determined that the best location for the Outdoor Fitness Court is at 32*

Playground Road, also known as Town Field, behind the Groton Public Library, adjacent to the outdoor basketball court. The funds requested are representative of the costs over and above the \$50,000 grant and will be utilized to complete the project. The full amount to be paid from the Unallocated Reserve.

- Select Board:**
- Finance Committee:**
- Community Preservation Committee:**

CPC Proposal G: SRRT – Phase II Permitting \$30,000

Summary: *Squannacook Greenways Inc. is requesting \$30,000 for funding to pay for the design and permitting of the next phase of the Squannacook River Rail Trail (SRRT). Phase I currently extends from Depot Street in Townsend to the Bertozzi Wildlife Management Area (WMA) in West Groton, for a distance of 3.7 miles. The proposed Phase II will be to continue the rail trail from the Bertozzi WMA to Cutler Field in West Groton for a distance of 2.1 miles along the scenic Squannacook River. The full amount to be paid from the Unallocated Reserve.*

- Select Board:**
- Finance Committee:**
- Community Preservation Committee:**

CPC Proposal H: Bancroft Castle Preservation Study \$15,000

Summary: *The Groton Historical Commission is requesting \$15,000 to commission a study by a qualified masonry preservation firm as to the structural integrity of the masonry remains of the Bancroft Castle atop Gibbet Hill. In addition, this study would outline a strategy to preserve those remains to the maximum extent practically and economically possible. The full amount to be paid from the Historic Reserve.*

- Select Board:**
- Finance Committee:**
- Community Preservation Committee:**

CPC Proposal I: Property Security, Safety and Preservation \$70,000

Summary: *The Groton Historical Society is requesting \$70,000 in order to make updates and repairs to the Boutwell House. These include the addition of demand security lighting, metal railings along a walkway, repairs to deteriorated windows and entryways, and assessment of the existing sprinkler system. The full amount to be paid from the Historic Reserve.*

- Select Board:**
- Finance Committee:**
- Community Preservation Committee:**

CPC Proposal J: 2023-2024 Housing Funding Request \$400,000

Summary: *The Affordable Housing Trust (AHT) is requesting \$400,000 to be transferred to the AHT to be spent on all allowable community housing purposes. Community Housing Funds can be used to acquire, create, support, rehabilitate and/or restore affordable housing if acquired or created with CPA funds. This application is the second annual application for CPA funds to support the Affordable Housing Trust in its work for the Town of Groton to create and support affordable housing. The full amount to be paid from the Community Housing Reserve.*

- Select Board:**
- Finance Committee:**
- Community Preservation Committee:**

CPC Proposal K: Housing Coordinator – FY 2025 \$62,659

Summary: *This application is requesting \$62,659 in CPA funding from the Community Housing category to fund the wages and benefits of the Housing Coordinator position (25-hours/week). The full amount to be paid from the Community Housing Reserve.*

- Select Board:**
- Finance Committee:**
- Community Preservation Committee:**

CPC Proposal L: Tools and Equipment for Building Trails \$11,640

Summary: *The Groton Trails Committee is requesting \$11,640 to purchase needed special tools and equipment for them to conduct their work. While it's not associated with any particular trail construction project(s), the special tools and equipment will be used to improve the Committee's overall efficiency, and thereby its capacity, for building, repairing, and enhancing trails in the Groton Trail Network (GTN). The GTN comprises trails on land owned by nonprofits (Groton Conservation Trust, New England Forestry Foundation), the Town of Groton (Groton Conservation Commission), and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (Department of Conservation and Recreation). The CPA Funds will be used to build, repair (for safety and/or erosion control) and enhance (for safety and/or new users) trails that are used by the public. To Fund this Project, \$5,000 will come from the Open Space Reserve and \$6,640 will come from the Unallocated Reserve.*

- Select Board:**
- Finance Committee:**
- Community Preservation Committee:**

Community Preservation Committee

Article 13: *Extend Center Sewer District*

To see if the Town will vote to extend the “Groton Center Sewer District” as established by the vote of the Special Town Meeting of February 6, 1989, under Article 7, and as shown most recently on the plan approved under article 14 of the Annual Town Meeting of April 25, 2005, to include the property shown on Assessors’ Map 115, Lot 25-0 (6 Fairway Drive) but only for the exclusive use of 6 Fairway Drive, and its successors or assigns, and provided that all costs of designing, laying, and construction of the extension and any associated connection and the cost of additional capacity and the property owner’s proportionate share of the general benefit facilities, and all other costs associated therewith, are paid by the owner of the property benefited thereby, whether by the assessment of betterments or otherwise, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Board of Sewer Commissioners

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: *This article requests authorization from the Town Meeting to expand the Center Sewer District to include 6 Fairway Drive, Groton. This article, if approved, will make Sewer available for the exclusive use of 6 Fairway Drive.*



Article 14: *Extend Four Corner Sewer District*

To see if the Town will vote to extend the “Four Corners Sewer District”, as established by the vote under Article 12 of the 2015 Spring Town Meeting, to include the property shown on Assessors’ Map 133, Lot 49-0 (797 Boston Road) but only for the exclusive use of 797 Boston Road, and its successors or assigns, and provided that all costs of designing, laying, and construction of the extension and any associated connection and the cost of additional capacity and the property owner’s proportionate share of the general benefit facilities, and all other costs associated therewith, are paid by the owner of the property benefited thereby, whether by the assessment of betterments or otherwise, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Board of Sewer Commissioners

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: *This article requests authorization from the Town Meeting to expand the Four Corners Sewer District to include 797 Boston Road, Groton. This article, if approved, will make Sewer available for the exclusive use of 797 Boston Road.*



Article 15: Citizens' Petition – Return to Voice Vote or Voter Card Count at Town Meeting

To see if the Town will vote to no longer use electronic voting and instead revert back to voice and voter card count at Town Meetings, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Citizens' Petition

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>
Guy L. Alberghini	215 Main Street	Tom Sweeny	53 Northwoods Road
Richard Chiriboga	460 Lowell Road	Pamela Wolfe	423 Lost Lake Drive
Bryan Richard	22 Winding Way	Judy Craig	220 Hemlock Park Drive
Eric Hillenberg	87 Northwoods Road	Robert Melvin	231 Mill Street
Raymond Roy	38 Ridgewood Ave	Karen Boucher	38 Ridgewood Avenue

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: The following summary was prepared by the petitioners and represents their view on the Article: *At the current time votes are entered into the voting system by way of clickers. When a petition needs to be passed by either a simple majority vote or two thirds of the vote did it really pass? For example say there are 200 votes. For a simple majority 101 votes would be needed to pass. Inside the system recognizes that 200 votes had been cast and needs 101 to pass. If the system only got 75 yes as well as 125 no votes. In less than a second the software will calculate that it needs 26 more to pass. The software will then reconfigure the vote results to show 101 yes votes and 99 no votes and looks like it passed. If this petition is passed, the votes at Town Meeting will bring back the voice vote as well as the vote by raising the card.*

Article 16: Citizens’ Petition – Reduce Statutory Speed Limit from 30 MPH to 25 MPH

To see if the Town will vote to amend Groton Traffic Rules and Orders, Article XI Speed Regulations, Town of Groton Speed Limits, by adopting MGL, c. 90, §17C Sections 193 of Chapter 218 of the Acts of 2016. Mass.gov: “Section 193 allows a municipality to opt-in to Section 17C of Chapter 90 of the MGL, thereby reducing the statutory speed limit from 30 mph to 25 mph on any or all city or town-owned roadways within a thickly settled or business district. The legislation also requires cities and towns to notify MassDOT of these changes,” or to take any other action relative thereto.

Citizens’ Petition

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>
Russel Harris	25 Longley Road	James A. Barisano	15 Longley Road
Deborah E. Johnson	25 Longley Road	Karen Tucker-Barisano	15 Longley Road
John MacLeod	81 Kemp Street	Paul Murray	85 Wharton Row
Jamie Christenson	189 Forge Village Road	June F. Cloutier	532 Longley Road
Eric M. Graham	64 Champney Street	David E. Butz	532 Longley Road

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: The following summary was prepared by the petitioners and represents their view on the Article: *At the Groton Master Plan Public Session held at the Groton Center, the Barrett Planning Group recently revealed that the risk of death to a pedestrian hit by a vehicle is 18% at 20 miles per hour, 50% at 30 miles per hour and 88% at 40 miles per hour. The Foundation for Traffic Safety reports: “Results show that the average risk of severe injury for a pedestrian struck by a vehicle reaches 10% at an impact speed of 16 mph, 25% at 23 mph, 50% at 31 mph, 75% at 39 mph, and 90% at 46 mph. The average risk of death for a pedestrian reaches 10% at an impact speed of 23 mph, 25% at 32 mph, 50% at 42 mph, 75% at 50 mph and 90% at 58 mph. Risks vary significantly by age. For example, the average risk of severe injury or death for a 70-year old pedestrian struck by a car traveling at 25 mph is similar to the risk for a 30-year old pedestrian struck at 35 mph. Groton has many roads with no sidewalks or bike lanes. Vehicles traveling on Groton’s roads routinely exceed the posted speed limits by five to ten miles per hour. This commonsense solution, which has been adopted by eighty Massachusetts cities and town, including towns adjacent to Groton, will reduce the risk of injury and death to those walking, jogging and on bicycles. From Mass.gov: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/speed-limits-in-thickly-settled-or-business-districts> “If a municipality opts-in, it will not supersede any existing posted speed limit. The legislation only affects streets that are currently governed by a statutory speed limit. If an existing special speed regulation is in place, it will continue to govern.” “MassDOT recommends that if a municipality opts-in to MGL c. 90, §17C, that it does so on a city- or town-wide basis to avoid potential confusion for drivers. However, cities and towns do have the option to opt-in on a street-by-street basis. Once a municipality has opted-in to MGL c. 90, §17C, it is required to notify MassDOT.”*

ARTICLES 17 THROUGH 26 WILL BE PART OF THE CONSENT AGENDA. PLEASE SEE EXPLANATION PROVIDED ON PAGE 2 OF THIS WARRANT.

Article 17: *Transfer within the Water Enterprise Fund*

To see if the Town will vote to transfer a sum or sums of money from the Water Enterprise Fund Surplus to the Fiscal Year 2024 Water Department Operating Budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Board of Water Commissioners

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: *This article will request a transfer of funds from Water Surplus to help fund the Fiscal Year 2024 Water Department’s Operational Expenses. As of the printing of the Warrant, it is anticipated that \$____,____ will be transferred for this purpose.*

Article 18: *Transfer Within the Center Sewer Enterprise Fund*

To see if the Town will vote to transfer a sum or sums of money from the Center Sewer Enterprise Fund Surplus to the Fiscal Year 2024 Center Sewer Enterprise Department Budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Board of Sewer Commissioners

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: *This article allows the Sewer Department to transfer money from its surplus account to cover any deficit in the Fiscal Year 2024 Center Sewer Budget. As of the printing of the Warrant, it is anticipated that \$____,____ will be transferred for this purpose.*

Article 19: Transfer Within the Four Corners Sewer Enterprise Fund

To see if the Town will vote to transfer a sum or sums of money from the Four Corners Sewer Enterprise Fund Surplus to the Fiscal Year 2024 Four Corners Sewer Enterprise Department Budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Board of Sewer Commissioners

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: *This article allows the Sewer Department to transfer money from its surplus account to cover any deficit in the Fiscal Year 2024 Four Corners Sewer Budget. As of the printing of the Warrant, it is anticipated that \$____,____ will be transferred for this purpose.*

Article 20: Transfer Within Cable Enterprise Fund

To see if the Town will vote to transfer a sum or sums of money from the Cable Enterprise Fund Surplus to the Fiscal Year 2024 Cable Enterprise Department Budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Cable Advisory Committee

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: *This article allows the Cable Advisory Committee to transfer money from its surplus account to cover any deficit in the Fiscal Year 2024 budget. As of the Printing of the Warrant, it is anticipated that \$____,____ will be transferred for this purpose.*

Article 21: Prior Year Bills

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds a sum or sums of money for the payment of unpaid bills from prior fiscal years, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Select Board

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: *Town Meeting approval is required to pay bills from a prior fiscal year. A list of unpaid bills will be provided at Town Meeting.*

Article 22: *Current Year Line-Item Transfers*

To see if the Town will vote to transfer certain sums of money within the Fiscal Year 2024 budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Select Board

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: *To transfer money within the Fiscal Year 2024 Budget should the need arise. A handout explaining any necessary transfers will be available at Town Meeting.*

Article 23: *Appropriate Money to Offset the Snow and Ice Deficit*

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, and/or borrow a sum or sums of money, to be expended by the Town Manager, to reduce the deficit in the Fiscal Year 2024 Snow and Ice Budget, as approved under Article 5 of the 2023 Spring Town Meeting, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: *This article will allow the Town to fund any deficit in the Snow and Ice Account in FY 24.*

Article 24: *Debt Service for Middle School Track – Fiscal Year 2024*

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds, a sum or sums of money, pursuant to Chapter 44B, Section 5, of the Massachusetts General Laws, for debt service for Fiscal Year 2024 for the Middle School Track Project, as authorized under Article 9 of the April 30, 2022 Spring Town Meeting, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Community Preservation Committee

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: *This Article appropriates the debt service payment for the Middle School Track Project. Article 9 of the April 30, 2022 Spring Town Meeting appropriated an additional \$1,000,000 for the project. Using FY 2024 Funds, the Community Preservation Committee will pay \$124,590 (\$120,000 for principal and \$4,590 for interest) in debt service. In addition, they will pay an additional \$20,000 towards un-borrowed principal. To fund this appropriation, \$124,590 will come from the Fiscal Year 2024 Unallocated Reserve and \$20,000 will come from the Fiscal Year 2024 Open Space Reserve.*

Article 25: Debt Service for Middle School Track – Fiscal Year 2025

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds, a sum or sums of money, pursuant to Chapter 44B, Section 5, of the Massachusetts General Laws, for debt service for Fiscal Year 2025 for the Middle School Track Project, as authorized under Article 7 of the May 1, 2021 Spring Town Meeting, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Community Preservation Committee

Select Board:

Finance Committee:

Summary: *This Article appropriates the debt service payment for the Middle School Track Project. Article 7 of the May 21, 2021 Spring Town Meeting appropriated \$1,405,374 for the project. In FY 2025, the Community Preservation Committee will pay \$238,914 in debt service (\$175,672 in principal payment and \$63,242 in interest payment) for this appropriation. To fund this appropriation the entire amount will come from the Unallocated Reserve.*

Article 26: Establishing Limits for the Various Revolving Funds

To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c. 44 sec 53E½ and the Revolving Fund Bylaw, to amend the Revolving Fund Bylaw to add or delete any revolving account and/or to set the FY 2025 spending limits for the various revolving funds as follows:

Program or Purpose	FY 2025 Spending Limit
Stormwater Management	\$20,000
Conservation Commission	\$50,000
Building Rental Fund	\$50,000
Affordable Housing Marketing	\$20,000
Home Recycling Equipment	\$10,000
Access for Persons with Disabilities	\$10,000
Council on Aging Program Fund	\$30,000
Boat Excise Tax Fund	\$ 5,000
Transfer Station Glass	\$20,000
Senior Center Fitness Equipment	\$10,000
Center Building Monitor	\$20,000

or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Select Board:
Finance Committee:

Summary: *This Article sets the limit of annual spending for the various revolving funds authorized by previous Town Meeting votes and is currently set forth in the Town’s Bylaw for said purpose.*

Hereof fail not and make return of your doings to the Town Clerk on or before time of said meeting.

Given under our hands this 4th Day of March in the year of our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Four.

Peter S. Cunningham

Peter S. Cunningham, Chair

John F. Reilly

John F. Reilly, Vice-Chair

Alison S. Manugian

Alison S. Manugian, Clerk

Rebecca H. Pine

Rebecca H. Pine, Member

Matthew F. Pisani

Matthew F. Pisani, Member

OFFICERS RETURN

Groton, Middlesex

Pursuant to the within Warrant, I have this day notified the Inhabitants to assemble at the time, place, and for the purpose mentioned as within directed. Personally posted by Constable.

Constable

Date Duly Posted

**BUDGET MESSAGE FROM THE
TOWN MANAGER
AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**TOWN OF GROTON
FISCAL YEAR 2025**

Pursuant to Article 6 “Finance and Fiscal Procedure”, Section 6.4 “The Budget”, of the Charter of the Town of Groton, Massachusetts, the Finance Committee, Select Board and Town Manager are pleased to submit for your consideration the Proposed Fiscal Year 2025 Operating Budget for the Town of Groton. Developing this Budget has been unlike any other, with unprecedented circumstances impacting Groton and its finances. Balancing the Fiscal Year 2024 was extremely difficult with significant cuts made by the Town of Groton and the Groton Dunstable Regional School District. Recognizing the gravity of the situation, the Select Board, Finance Committee and Town Manager took proactive measures early in the summer to address the impending challenges in Fiscal Year 2025.

The Town Manager’s Tri-Comm Working Group made up of representatives from the Select Board, Finance Committee, Groton Dunstable Regional School Committee and Town and School Administrations worked together with the specific task of reviewing the issues impacting the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget. The Working Group conducted a detailed review of current spending, developed preliminary revenue projections and spending assumptions, and developed a three-year Financial Plan for the Town of Groton. The outcome of the work showed that the Town would be facing a major Budget Deficit over the next three fiscal years.

Working cooperatively, the Town of Groton and the Groton Dunstable Regional School District have worked towards finding viable solutions to address the anticipated deficits. Maintaining the excellent services that the Community relies on was of utmost importance in developing the Fiscal Year 2025 Operating Budget. That said, the financial strain caused by the lack of sustained revenue sources, including the lack of support from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, no longer receiving Federal Funding (ARPA, CARES Act, ESSER II) that was used to balance the Budget in Fiscal Year 2022 and Fiscal Year 2023, and the use of non-recurring revenue sources by the Groton Dunstable Regional School District, has made it increasingly difficult to balance the budget without making drastic and devastating cuts. In order to ensure that Groton continues to thrive and provide the services that its residents deserve, the Finance Committee, Select Board and Town Manager find themselves in a position where an override of Proposition 2½ must be considered. An override of Proposition 2 1/2 would allow the Town to bridge the financial gap and provide the necessary resources to sustain the quality services that have become synonymous with Groton. While it is understood that this is a difficult decision, it is firmly believed that it is the right one to secure a brighter future for Groton and the School District.

In accordance with the Groton Charter and the Town’s Financial Policies, the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Process is the ninth year where the Select Board and Finance Committee have provided direction prior to the development of the proposed budget. The Select Board and Finance Committee met with the Town Manager prior to the issuance of the initial budget instructions to review objectives and develop

specific goals that would be followed during the development of the Fiscal Year 2025 Proposed Operating Budget. At the budget guidance development meeting in October, the Select Board and Finance Committee voted unanimously to provide the following direction to the Town Manager:

1. One Budget shall be balanced with no proposed Override of Proposition 2½.
2. The second budget shall be a level services budget (*maintains services at the FY 2024 level and does not add any new services*) that proposes a potential override of Proposition 2½ to eliminate a projected three-year deficit.
3. The Town Manager shall collaborate with representatives of the Groton Dunstable Regional School District and Nashoba Valley Technical School District to create these two budgets.

In order to comply with this guidance in a comprehensive, understandable and professional manner, the main budget that was presented to the Finance Committee for consideration was the Level Services Budget. The Level Services Budget required an Override of Proposition 2½. The purpose of presenting the Budget in this manner was to allow the Finance Committee and Select Board to have a baseline understanding of the current level of services being provided. It represented the continuation of existing services without any changes or adjustments. It served as a starting point for evaluating the financial needs of Groton. After a thorough review of the Level Services Budget, the Finance Committee and Select Board determined that an Override of Proposition 2½ was necessary to maintain services.

Revenue estimates for Fiscal Year 2025 were consistent with the five-year average in the various categories, including a slight increase in Unrestricted Local Aid from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts based on Governor Maura Healey’s proposed budget. In addition, New Growth was estimated at \$20 million, which will generate an additional \$301,800 in tax revenues in Fiscal Year 2025. Due to the unprecedented increase in Estimated Receipts in Fiscal Year 2024 (over a 12% increase), a more conservative approach was taken in Fiscal Year 2025. Local receipts have been increased by \$130,563 from \$5,497,383 to \$5,627,946, or 2.4%. Given the major increase in Fiscal Year 2024, it would not be prudent or fiscally responsible to expect the same kind of increase two years in a row. The following is a summary of what is anticipated in the major Estimated Receipts for FY 2025:

1. **Motor Vehicle Excise Taxes** – The five-year average is \$1,823,309. Based on this, Motor Vehicle Excise Taxes have been budgeted at \$1,820,583 in FY 2025.
2. **Meals Tax/Room Occupancy Tax** – This has been an excellent revenue source over the last couple of years. In Fiscal Year 2024, the estimate was increased by \$50,000. After reviewing what was received during the first two quarters of Fiscal Year 2024, this Receipt has been level funded at \$400,000 for Fiscal Year 2025.

3. **Recreational Marijuana Revenue** – Unfortunately, the opening of the two recreational marijuana facilities were delayed, with one opening in October, 2023 and the other not expected to open until July, 2024. Based on this, the amount estimated in FY 2024 (\$150,000) will not come to fruition and this Receipt was reduced to \$75,000 in FY 2025.
4. **Payments in Lieu of Taxes** – This Receipt has been increased by \$18,500 to \$390,000 based on the success of the ticket surcharge agreed to by Groton Hill Music.
5. **Other Charges for Services** – This Receipt has been decreased by \$84,000 based on the decision of the Groton Select Board to join the Patriot Regional Emergency Communications Center in FY 2025 and Dunstable will no longer be making this payment for Dispatch Services to Groton.
6. **Other Departmental Revenue** – This Receipt has been increased by \$50,000 to \$854,063 in anticipation of the reimbursement from the Enterprise Funds increasing due to an anticipated increase in intergovernmental cost share.
7. **Investment Income** – Due to an increase in interest rates and the prudent investment of Town funds, this Receipt has been increased by \$125,000 to \$225,000 in FY 2025.
8. **Recreation Revenues** – Based on the last four years of outstanding success of the Groton Country Club, this Receipt has been increased by \$50,000 to \$750,000 in FY 2025.

The following chart shows what we expect to receive in revenues that can be used to fund the Proposed Operating Budget:

<u>Revenue Source</u>	<u>Budgeted FY 2024</u>	<u>Proposed FY 2025</u>	<u>Dollar Change</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
Property Tax*	\$ 36,832,663	\$ 38,055,280	\$ 1,222,617	3.32%
State Aid	\$ 1,116,143	\$ 1,145,967	\$ 29,824	2.67%
Local Receipts - Excluding Country Club	\$ 4,797,383	\$ 4,877,946	\$ 84,626	1.76%
Country Club Revenue	\$ 700,000	\$ 750,000	\$ 50,000	7.14%
Other Available Funds	\$ 350,000	\$ 350,000	\$ -	0.00%
TOTAL	\$ 43,796,189	\$ 45,179,193	\$ 1,387,067	3.17%

*Includes 2½ percent increase allowed by law and \$20 million in new growth.

In developing the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget, a review of mandatory expenditures is warranted, as well as areas in the budget that are routine in nature. With regard to mandatory expenditures, two categories fit this definition, Pension and Health Insurance. With regard to the Pension Budget, Middlesex County has informed the Town that its Assessment in Fiscal Year 2025 will increase by 6.36%, or by \$158,739 from \$2,494,280 to \$2,653,019. With regard to Health Insurance, in FY 2025, given the financial situation and in an effort to find efficiencies and cost savings, the Town needed to examine its membership with the Minuteman Nashoba Health Group (MNHG). The Town has been a member of MNHG since 1991. Membership in this group for many years was very advantageous. However, as rates have increased a number of members have left the group and moved to other

collaboratives, in most cases the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA). In Fiscal Year 2024, due to high claims from some of the members and a number of other members leaving the group, Groton received a 13.5% increase in rates. An increase at this level is unsustainable and caused more members to leave the group. The Town of Groton needed to protect itself and consider other alternatives. To that end, the Town reached out to MIIA with the intent of joining them for Health Insurance in FY 2025 (the Town currently has its property, casualty, automobile and workers compensation insurance with MIIA). Pursuant to M.G.L., c. 32B, the Town worked with its Insurance Advisory Committee (made up of representatives from the Unions, Bylaw Employees and Retirees) seeking a recommendation from them to join MIIA. The employees of the Town, as has been the case over the years, stepped to the plate to help the Town achieve budget stability and voted unanimously to allow the Town to leave MNHG and join MIIA. The Select Board voted unanimously to make this change. Based on this decision, instead of seeing a double digit percentage increase in Health Insurance, this budget will only increase by 3.38%, or by \$70,588 from \$2,090,563 to \$2,161,151.

The Town now has six (6) Collective Bargaining Units (with the move to join the Patriot Regional Emergency Communications Center, the Communications Union will be disbanded). All contracts will be entering the final year of three-year deals. All Unions have agreed to a 2% wage adjustment in FY 2025. Based on the Agreements with the Town's Collective Bargaining Units, along with the employees that have contracts, salaries and wages will increase by \$231,964 in FY 2025.

The Town continue to see an increase in Excluded Debt for Fiscal Year 2025 as it pays debt service on the Florence Roche Elementary School Project to cover both debt that has been permanently financed (\$28 million), as well as borrowed using bond anticipation notes (approximately \$27 million). For Fiscal Year 2025, Municipal Excluded Debt will increase from \$4,326,958 to \$4,649,077, an increase of \$322,119 or 7.4%. Excluded Debt from the Groton Dunstable Regional School District will decrease by \$22,280, or 5.5% from \$406,982 to \$384,622. Overall, Excluded Debt will increase in Fiscal Year 2025 by \$299,804, or 6.3% from \$4,732,786 to \$5,032,590. In addition, the FY 2025 Budget continues the practice to stabilize debt service within the Levy Limit at approximately \$250,000 - \$300,000 annually. The Town continues to follow the plan by using the Excess and Deficiency ("Free Cash") Account to pay down the Principal and Interest on the Police and Fire Radio Project with the intent of paying that off in FY 2025. In addition, Free Cash will be used to make the third payment for the Dump Truck approved in 2022. Finally, FY 2025 will be the first year that Town begins to pay for the Fire Truck that was approved at the 2022 Spring Town Meeting. Last year, \$243,625 was used for these purposes and committed \$230,980 from taxation to cover non-excluded Debt Service. In FY 2025, Free Cash will continue to be used for the same items (\$132,170). The following chart shows a comparison between FY 2024 and FY 2025:

	<u>FY 2024</u>	<u>FY 2025</u>
Long Term Debt - Principal Non-Excluded	\$ 153,506	\$ 165,000
Long Term Debt - Interest - Non-Excluded	\$ 77,474	\$ 110,364
Short Term Debt - Principal	\$ 212,949	\$ 123,526
Short Term Debt - Interest	<u>\$ 30,676</u>	<u>\$ 8,644</u>
Total	\$ 474,605	\$ 407,534
Less Free Cash Offset	\$ 243,625	\$ 132,170
Total In-Levy Taxation for Debt Service	\$ 230,980	\$ 275,364

For the last three years, the Country Club has been a success and a revenue generator for the Town of Groton. Fiscal Year 2023 was the most successful year the Country Club has ever had in terms of revenue generation. In Fiscal Year 2023, the Club made a profit of \$119,713 (total expenses of \$674,656; total revenues of \$794,369). It is expected that the Country Club will continue performing at this level in Fiscal Year 2025

Health Insurance is not the only area in the Municipal Budget where the Town was able to realize a savings in Fiscal Year 2025. As part of the top to bottom review of all Town Operations to find ways to improve the delivery of services, find economies and potential consolidations to offset the FY 2025 Deficit, a detailed review of the Communications Department was undertaken. In 2022, the Town hired Municipal Resources, Inc. to conduct a study of the dispatch operation and provide recommendations to improve the overall operation. One of the recommendations was to “seek additional communities to join the Town’s Regional Emergency Communications Center (RECC)”. The best way to address this was to join another RECC. After a thorough review of options and looking at ways to improve the Town’s operations, the Select Board approved joining the Patriot RECC. Patriot is currently made up of Pepperell, Townsend and Ashby. It operates out of the Pepperell Police Station and has been in operation for the last three years. Groton and Dunstable Dispatch Operations will transfer to the Patriot RECC effective July 1, 2024.

Currently, the Town of Groton receives approximately \$260,000 annually in State 911 Grants to supplement Groton’s RECC operating expenses, as well as \$84,000 from the Town of Dunstable. Of the total Grant, the Town uses approximately \$120,000 each year to offset Wages within the Communications Department. Based on the States’ support of this proposed merger, Groton’s Patriot RECC Assessment will be paid for by the Development Grant at 100% for the first three years, 50% in year four, and 25% in year five. In FY 2025, this decision will save the Town \$464,314 in expenses. One issue that needs to be addressed with this merger is that there will no longer be anyone to greet the public at the Police Station as the current Dispatchers will be relocated to Pepperell. To address this, additional administrative support to cover the hours of 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday to assist the Public has been added to the Budget at a cost of \$84,133, including benefits.

At the 2015 Spring Town Meeting, the Town voted to create a Cable Enterprise Fund for Fiscal Year 2016. At the time, Cable Revenues were strong and had a healthy level of reserves (\$210,037) in their E&D Account at the end of FY 2016). At the time, it made sense to create the Enterprise to cover all of their expenses, including all overhead costs. The overhead costs, including Health Insurance,

Retirement Assessment, Medicare and Life Insurance, are paid back to the General Fund to cover those funds appropriated in the Town’s Operating Budget. Cable Revenues come from a surcharge on Cable Bills. From FY 2017 through FY 2019, the Enterprise kept a healthy amount of reserves and was operating as a successful Enterprise Fund. However, since 2019, more residents have moved away from cable to the various streaming services and the Town has seen a steady decrease in Cable Fees and the Cable Enterprise has had to depend more on its Excess and Deficiency Account to balance the budget. The following is a summary of the Cable Enterprise from FY 2017 through FY 2023 showing the Actual Expenses and the ending certified Excess and Deficiency Fund:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Actual Expenses</u>	<u>Certified E & D</u>
2017	\$ 217,032	\$ 231,477
2018	\$ 191,636	\$ 245,762
2019	\$ 195,203	\$ 258,810
2020	\$ 193,337	\$ 220,828
2021	\$ 209,470	\$ 174,891
2022	\$ 183,337	\$ 127,260
2023	\$ 217,638	\$ 63,329

Since 2019, as fees have totaled an average of \$165,000 annually, the Cable Enterprise has had to use approximately \$60,000 from their E&D Account to balance their budget. Fiscal Year 2024 is the last year where they have enough cash to balance their budget without running a deficit. There will not be enough funding between cable revenues and the Excess and Deficiency Fund (E&D) to balance the Cable Budget in FY 2025. That said, the services provided by the Local Cable Access Department are valued and important services to Groton residents. Not only does the Cable Department provide excellent coverage of various meetings and events in Town, but it also provides important information for Groton residents. To address this and determine the best course of action to continue to provide Local Cable Access while dealing with the loss of revenues, a “Cable Department Receipts Reserved for Appropriation Fund” will be created if approved by Town Meeting. Creation of this fund, similar to the Ambulance Receipts Reserved for Appropriation Fund, will allow the Town to collect the fees received from the two cable carriers servicing Groton and put them in this Reserve Account for the exclusive use of the Local Cable Access Department. For Fiscal Year 2025, since there will not be enough to fund the Cable Budget at the beginning of the year (only available funds can be transferred from a Reserve Account), the Town will use its Free Cash Account to fund the Local Access Cable Budget in FY 2025. This will allow the Reserve Account to build a sufficient balance to fund the Department in FY 2026. Use of Free Cash will also allow the Town to continue providing Cable Services. The Proposed Fiscal Year 2025 Local Access Cable Department Budget is \$155,442 and will be funded from Free Cash. The General Fund will pay for the overhead costs (approximately \$63,000) as it does for all other Town Departments.

Developing the proposed Fiscal Year 2025 Groton Dunstable Regional School District Assessment started in July, 2023 in conjunction with the Town Manager’s Tri-Comm Working Group. By starting the process so early, the Town and School District were able to plan accordingly for Fiscal Year 2025. Various budget drivers, including increases in the Middlesex Country Retirement Assessment (6.5%), Health Insurance (10%), Residential and Private School Tuitions (12.75% each), Utilities (10%) and

Wages (currently under negotiations), put the District in an exceedingly difficult position in FY 2025. Based on a thorough review of anticipated State Aid and other revenue sources, the Assessments from Groton and Dunstable would need to increase substantially to allow the District to meet its obligations and continue to provide an outstanding education for our children. The initial estimate for the Groton Assessment was \$30,142,258, an increase of \$4,180,693, or 16.11%. It is important to state that the increased assessment is required to maintain the current program offerings. There are no new services being considered or proposed. That said, based on the decision of the School Committee to reduce the dependency on using their Excess and Deficiency Fund over a couple of years, phase out full day kindergarten tuition over a couple of years, and reduce anticipated staff needs to accommodate the Groton Students coming back to Groton from the Swallow Union Elementary School to the new Florence Roche Elementary School, the District has been able to reduce its original anticipated Assessment by \$1,400,316 to \$28,741,942. The proposed Assessment would increase by \$2,804,226, or 10.81%. With regard to the Nashoba Valley Regional Technical High School, it is anticipated that Groton's enrollment will increase by nine students (from 41 in FY24 to 50 in FY25). Groton's projected enrollment portion of the Budget will increase from 5.73% in FY 24 to 6.61% in FY 25. Based on this, Groton's Assessment will increase by 204,063 in FY 2025 from \$762,656 to \$966,719, or 26.76%.

Section 6-5 of the Groton Charter requires the Finance Committee to provide a report that details the differences between the Town Manager's Proposed Budget and their final Proposed Budget. The following Chart shows the differences between the budget received by the Finance Committee from the Town Manager on December 31, 2023 and the budget that will be proposed to the 2024 Spring Town Meeting:

<u>Line</u>	<u>Department/Description</u>	<u>Original Proposed</u>	<u>Committee Approved</u>
1212	Planning Board Expenses	\$ 9,950	\$ 9,625
1273	Board of Health - Nashoba Health District	\$ 38,833	\$ 43,081
1280	Sealer of Weights and Measures Fee Salaries	\$ 2,837	\$ -
1281	Sealer of Weights and Measures Expenses	\$ 100	\$ 3,262
1400	Nashoba Valley Tech Operating Assessment	\$ 962,656	\$ 966,719
1410	GDRSD Operating Assessment	\$ 29,392,165	\$ 28,741,942
1414	GDRSD Capital Assessment	\$ 550,000	\$ 295,767

The following is the total proposed Fiscal Year 2025 Level Services Operating Budget proposed for Town Meeting consideration (compared with Fiscal Year 2024):

<u>Category</u>	<u>FY 2024</u>	<u>FY 2025</u>	<u>Dollar Difference</u>	<u>Percentage Change</u>
General Government	\$ 2,388,159	\$ 2,472,927	\$ 84,768	3.55%
Land Use	\$ 499,606	\$ 520,749	\$ 21,143	4.23%
Protection of Persons and Property	\$ 4,772,597	\$ 4,515,079	\$ (257,518)	-5.40%
Department of Public Works	\$ 2,351,495	\$ 2,389,516	\$ 38,021	1.62%
Library and Citizen Services*	\$ 1,947,870	\$ 2,192,957	\$ 245,086	12.58%
Employee Benefits	\$ 4,930,663	\$ 5,174,990	\$ 244,327	4.96%
Sub-Total	\$ 16,890,390	\$ 17,266,217	\$ 375,828	2.23%
Debt Service - Excluded	\$ 4,326,957	\$ 4,649,077	\$ 322,120	7.44%
Debt Service - In Levy Only	\$ 474,605	\$ 407,534	\$ (67,071)	-14.13%
Sub-Total - All Municipal	\$ 21,691,952	\$ 22,322,828	\$ 630,877	2.91%
Nashoba Tech	\$ 762,656	\$ 966,719	\$ 204,063	26.76%
Groton-Dunstable Operating	\$ 25,937,716	\$ 28,741,942	\$ 2,804,226	10.81%
Groton-Dunstable Excluded Debt	\$ 406,982	\$ 384,622	\$ (22,360)	-5.49%
Groton-Dunstable Debt	\$ 58,814	\$ 60,534	\$ 1,720	2.92%
Groton Dunstable Capital	\$ 552,203	\$ 295,767	\$ (256,436)	-46.44%
Sub-Total - Education	\$ 27,718,371	\$ 30,449,584	\$ 2,731,213	9.85%
Grand Total - Town Budget	\$ 49,410,323	\$ 52,772,412	\$ 3,362,090	6.80%

*In FY 2025, Library and Citizen Services includes the Cable Access Department for the first time

Based on this Proposed Budget and the guidance provided to the Town Manager to propose an override that would eliminate a projected three-year deficit, the Town Manager’s Tri-Comm Working Group had developed budget projections for both the Municipal Budget and the Assessment of the Groton Dunstable Regional School District (GDRSD). Factors, including salary increases, pension increases, health insurance increases, utility expenses, anticipated State Aid (both unrestricted local aid and Chapter 70 and 71 School Funding), new growth and estimated receipts were considered. After this thorough analysis, the following Three Year Projection (FY 2025 through FY 2027) was developed:

Town of Groton

Summary of Projected Revenues and Expenditures

General Fund Revenues	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
Property Tax Levy	41,565,448	43,087,871	45,504,776	46,912,790
State Aid Cherry Sheet	1,116,143	1,145,967	1,165,043	1,184,501
Estimated Local Receipts	5,497,383	5,623,883	5,677,569	5,732,329
Available Funds/Other Financing Sources	2,217,637	2,321,460	2,321,460	2,321,460
Enterprise (for Indirects)	336,486	315,664	321,977	328,417
Total General Fund Revenues	50,733,097	52,494,845	54,990,825	56,479,497
Total Revenue Percentage Change		3.5%	4.8%	2.7%

General Fund Expenditures	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
General Government	2,388,159	2,472,927	2,519,726	2,567,551
Land Use	499,605	520,749	531,838	543,185
Public Safety	4,772,597	4,515,079	4,600,296	4,687,167
Regional Schools	27,718,371	30,699,754	33,093,439	35,829,711
Department of Public Works	2,351,495	2,389,517	2,433,734	2,478,903
Library and Citizen Services	1,947,870	2,192,957	2,239,917	2,287,972
Employee Benefits	4,930,663	5,174,990	5,483,218	5,810,559
Debt Service	4,801,562	5,056,611	6,519,225	6,512,851
Total Town Budget	49,410,322	53,022,584	57,421,393	60,717,899
State Assessments	95,249	101,443	101,443	101,443
Other Amounts Raised	982,606	1,081,078	1,081,078	1,081,078
Total General Fund Expenditures	50,488,177	54,205,105	58,603,914	61,900,420
General Fund Surplus/(Shortfall)	244,920	(1,710,260)	(3,613,089)	(5,420,923)
Total Expenditures Percentage Change		7.4%	8.1%	5.6%

The Level Services Budget will create a deficit of \$1,710,260 in Fiscal Year 2025, with a three year projected deficit of \$5,420,923. Based on this and in compliance with the Guidance, the Town Manager proposed and the Select Board and Finance Committee agreed to seek an **Override of \$5,500,000** in Fiscal Year 2025 to eliminate the projected three year deficit. Depending on new growth and potential increases in both estimated receipts and State Aid, this amount may last four or five years. The Finance Committee, Select Board, Town Manager and School District Administration will continue to refine these estimates with an eye on cost savings and efficiencies to stretch the override for as many years as possible. The following is the revised Three Year Projection with an Override of \$5,500,000 in Fiscal Year 2025:

Town of Groton
Summary of Projected Revenues and Expenditures

General Fund Revenues	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
Property Tax Levy	41,565,448	48,587,871	51,142,276	52,691,227
State Aid Cherry Sheet	1,116,143	1,145,967	1,165,043	1,184,501
Estimated Local Receipts	5,497,383	5,623,883	5,677,569	5,732,329
Available Funds/Other Financing Sources	2,217,637	2,321,460	2,321,460	2,321,460
Enterprise (for Indirects)	336,486	315,664	321,977	328,417
Total General Fund Revenues	50,733,097	57,994,845	60,628,325	62,257,934
Total Revenue Percentage Change		14.3%	4.5%	2.7%

General Fund Expenditures	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
General Government	2,388,159	2,472,927	2,519,726	2,567,551
Land Use	499,605	520,749	531,838	543,185
Public Safety	4,772,597	4,515,079	4,600,296	4,687,167
Regional Schools	27,718,371	30,699,754	33,093,439	35,829,711
Department of Public Works	2,351,495	2,389,516	2,433,734	2,478,903
Library and Citizen Services	1,947,870	2,192,957	2,239,917	2,287,972
Employee Benefits	4,930,663	5,174,990	5,483,218	5,810,559
Debt Service	4,801,562	5,056,611	6,519,225	6,512,851
Total Town Budget	49,410,322	53,022,583	57,421,393	60,717,899
State Assessments	95,249	101,443	101,443	101,443
Other Amounts Raised	982,606	1,081,078	1,081,078	1,081,078
Total General Fund Expenditures	50,488,177	54,205,104	58,603,914	61,900,420
General Fund Surplus/(Shortfall)	244,920	3,789,741	2,024,411	357,514
Total Expenditures Percentage Change		7.4%	8.1%	5.6%

The following Chart shows how the \$5,500,000 will be disbursed over the next three years should the Override be approved:

	<u>FY 2025</u>	<u>FY 2026</u>	<u>FY 2027</u>
Levy - No Override	\$ 38,055,280	\$ 39,383,662	\$ 40,754,679
Other Revenues	<u>\$ 9,406,974</u>	<u>\$ 9,486,049</u>	<u>\$ 9,566,707</u>
Total Revenues	\$ 47,462,254	\$ 48,869,711	\$ 50,321,386
Anticipated Budget	\$ 49,171,404		
Deficit*	\$ 1,709,150		
New Levy Using Override Funds		\$ 41,135,541	
Other Revenues		<u>\$ 9,486,049</u>	
Total Revenues		\$ 50,621,590	
Anticipated Budget		\$ 52,482,800	
Deficit		\$ 1,861,210	
New Levy Using Override Funds			\$ 44,458,095
			<u>\$ 9,566,707</u>
Total Revenues			\$ 54,024,802
Anticipated Budget			\$ 55,742,309
Deficit			\$ 1,717,507
	Override Requested	\$ 5,500,000	
	FY 2025 Need	\$ 1,709,150	
	FY 2026 Need	\$ 1,861,210	
	FY 2027 Need	\$ 1,717,507	
Remaining Balance**		\$ 212,133	

*Please note that the actual deficit in FY 2025 is \$1,710,260, but it is offset by \$1,110 in bond proceeds.

**Please note that by adding the entire amount of the override (\$5,500,000) in FY 2025 the levy will increase by an additional \$145,381, leaving a balance in FY 2027 of \$357,514

The following chart shows the projected tax impact should the override pass over the next three years, with an additional chart showing the total tax bill increase when you take into consideration previously approved excluded debt:

NO OVERRIDE				OVERRIDE				Override Cost
Fiscal Year	Tax Rate	Average Tax Bill	Increase Per Year	Tax Rate	Average Tax Bill	Increase Per Year		
2024	\$ 13.36	\$ 9,284		\$ 13.36	\$ 9,284		\$ -	
2025	\$ 13.80	\$ 9,590	\$ 306	\$ 14.42	\$ 10,021	\$ 737	\$ 431	
2026	\$ 14.16	\$ 9,840	\$ 250	\$ 15.47	\$ 10,751	\$ 730	\$ 480	
2027	\$ 14.54	\$ 10,104	\$ 264	\$ 16.48	\$ 11,453	\$ 702	\$ 438	
Total Increase		\$ 820		\$ 2,168				

Over three years, the average tax bill with an override will increase by \$1,341 or an average of \$447 per year.

Breakdown of Tax Increase

Fiscal Year	Normal Prop 2½ Increase	Override Increase	Existing Excluded Debt	FloRo Excluded Debt	PFAS Excluded Debt	Total Increase	Total Average Tax Bill
2025	\$ 306	\$ 431	\$ 21	\$ 41	\$ -	\$ 799	\$ 11,286
2026	\$ 250	\$ 480	\$ (7)	\$ 183	\$ 82	\$ 988	\$ 12,273
2027	\$ 264	\$ 438	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 702	\$ 12,974

- Based on FY 2024 Property Values
- Accounts for \$20 million in New Growth in FY 2025
- Accounts for \$23 million in New Growth in FY 2026
- Accounts for \$22 million in New Growth in FY 2027
- Based on Home Valued at \$694,934

The total Level Services Fiscal Year 2025 Proposed Operating Budget, including the proposed Assessments of the Groton Dunstable Regional School District and the Nashoba Valley Regional Technical High School, and excluded debt, is \$52,772,412, or an increase of 6.80% and will require an Operational Override of Proposition 2½. When you take into consideration the proposed Capital Budget, Enterprise Fund Budgets and additional appropriations raised on the recap sheet, the total Level Services Budget is \$57,545,902. Based on the Level Services Budget with an approved override, the estimated Tax Rate for Fiscal Year 2025 is \$16.24, or an increase of \$1.15, of which \$0.62 is attributable to the override. In Fiscal Year 2024, the average Tax Bill in the Town of Groton (based on a home valued at \$694,934) is \$10,487. Under this proposed Level Services Budget (including the override), that same homeowner can expect a tax bill of \$11,286, or an increase of \$799, of which \$431 is attributable to the override. The following chart shows a comparison between FY 2024 and FY 2025, including the Override:

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Dollar</u>	<u>Percent</u>
	<u>FY 2024</u>	<u>FY 2025</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>Change</u>
Levy Capacity Used	\$ 36,607,742	\$ 38,055,280	\$ 1,447,538	3.95%
Tax Rate on Levy Capacity Used	\$ 13.36	\$ 13.80	\$ 0.44	3.29%
Average Tax Bill	\$ 9,284	\$ 9,590	\$ 306	3.29%
Override	\$ -	\$ 1,710,260	\$ 1,710,260	100.00%
Tax Rate on Override	\$ -	\$ 0.62	\$ 0.62	100.00%
Average Tax Bill	\$ -	\$ 431	\$ 431	100.00%
Excluded Debt	\$ 4,732,786	\$ 5,032,590	\$ 299,804	6.33%
Tax Rate on Excluded Debt	\$ 1.73	\$ 1.82	\$ 0.09	5.20%
Average Tax Bill	\$ 1,202	\$ 1,265	\$ 63	5.20%
Final Levy Used	\$ 41,340,528	\$ 44,798,130	\$ 3,457,602	8.36%
Final Tax Rate	\$ 15.09	\$ 16.24	\$ 1.15	7.62%
Average Tax Bill	\$ 10,487	\$ 11,286	\$ 799	7.62%

The Town Manager and Finance Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank the Select Board, Town Accountant Patricia DuFresne, Town Treasurer/Collector Hannah Moller, Assistant Treasurer/Collector Michael Hartnett, Town Clerk Dawn Dunbar, Principal Assessor Megan Foster, Human Resources Director Melisa Doig, Executive Assistant Kara Cruikshank and all of the Departments, Boards, Committees and Commissions for their outstanding work and cooperation in assisting in the preparation of the Proposed Operating Budget. In addition, the outstanding support and cooperation by Superintendent Dr. Laura Chesson, Business Manager Sherry Kersey and the Groton Dunstable Regional School District Committee was extremely important in developing this budget.

The Finance Committee encourages the public to attend its meetings and contribute through asking questions, providing comments, and listening to others debate the many important financial issues before the Town today.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark W. Haddad

Groton Town Manager

Respectfully submitted,

Bud Robertson, Chair

Colby Doody, Vice Chair

Gary Green

David Manugian

Scott Whitefield

Michael Sulprizio

Mary Linskey

Groton Finance Committee

**TOWN OF GROTON
FISCAL YEAR 2025
REVENUE ESTIMATES**

	<u>BUDGETED FY 2024</u>		<u>ESTIMATED FY 2025</u>		<u>CHANGE</u>
PROPERTY TAX REVENUE*	\$ 36,832,663	\$	38,055,280	\$	1,222,617
OVERRIDE FUNDS	\$ -	\$	1,710,260	\$	1,710,260
DEBT EXCLUSIONS	\$ 4,732,786	\$	5,032,590	\$	299,804
CHERRY SHEET - STATE AID	\$ 1,116,143	\$	1,145,967	\$	29,824
UNEXPENDED TAX CAPACITY	\$ 244,920	\$	-	\$	(244,920)
LOCAL RECEIPTS:					
General Revenue:					
Motor Vehicle Excise Taxes	\$ 1,820,583	\$	1,820,583	\$	-
Meals Tax and Room Occupancy Tax	\$ 400,000	\$	400,000	\$	-
Marijuana Revenue	\$ 150,000	\$	75,000	\$	(75,000)
Penalties & Interest on Taxes	\$ 110,000	\$	110,000	\$	-
Payments in Lieu of Taxes	\$ 371,500	\$	390,000	\$	18,500
Other Charges for Services	\$ 99,000	\$	15,000	\$	(84,000)
Fees	\$ 392,000	\$	400,000	\$	8,000
Rentals	\$ 40,000	\$	55,000	\$	15,000
Library Revenues	\$ -	\$	-	\$	-
Other Departmental Revenue	\$ 800,000	\$	854,063	\$	54,063
Licenses and Permits	\$ 429,300	\$	429,300	\$	-
Fines and Forfeits	\$ 20,000	\$	10,000	\$	(10,000)
Investment Income	\$ 90,000	\$	225,000	\$	135,000
Recreation Revenues	\$ 700,000	\$	750,000	\$	50,000
Miscellaneous Recurring	\$ 75,000	\$	94,000	\$	19,000
Sub-total - General Revenue	\$ 5,497,383	\$	5,627,946	\$	130,563
Other Revenue:					
Free Cash	\$ 818,137	\$	697,960	\$	(120,177)
Capital Stabilization Fund for GDRSD	\$ 253,407	\$	295,767	\$	42,360
Stabilization Fund for Tax Rate Relief	\$ -	\$	-	\$	-
Capital Asset Stabilization Fund	\$ 620,142	\$	723,500	\$	103,358
EMS/Conservation Fund Receipts Reserve	\$ 525,951	\$	350,000	\$	(175,951)
Community Preservation Funds	\$ -	\$	-	\$	-
Water Department Surplus	\$ -	\$	-	\$	-
Sewer Department Surplus	\$ -	\$	-	\$	-
Insurance Reimbursements	\$ -	\$	-	\$	-
Bond Surplus Transfer	\$ -	\$	-	\$	-
Coronavirus Recovery Funds	\$ -	\$	-	\$	-
Sub-total - Other Revenue	\$ 2,217,637	\$	2,067,227	\$	(150,410)
WATER DEPARTMENT ENTERPRISE	\$ 2,090,822	\$	2,310,267	\$	219,444
SEWER DEPARTMENT ENTERPRISE	\$ 889,499	\$	1,250,475	\$	360,976
LOCAL ACCESS CABLE ENTERPRISE	\$ 230,137	\$	-	\$	(230,137)
FOUR CORNER SEWER ENTERPRISE	\$ 77,811	\$	98,040	\$	20,229
STORMWATER UTILITY ENTERPRISE	\$ 242,520	\$	247,851	\$	5,331
TOTAL ESTIMATED REVENUE	\$ 53,929,802	\$	57,545,902	\$	3,616,100

**TOWN OF GROTON
FISCAL YEAR 2025
TAX LEVY CALCULATIONS**

FY 2025 PROPOSED EXPENDITURES

FINANCE COMMITTEE - Proposed Budget

General Government	\$	2,472,927
Land Use Departments	\$	520,749
Protection of Persons and Property	\$	4,515,079
Regional School Districts	\$	30,449,584
Department of Public Works	\$	2,389,516
Library and Citizen Services	\$	2,192,957
Debt Service	\$	5,056,611
Employee Benefits	\$	5,174,990

Sub-Total - Operating Budget \$ 52,772,412

A. TOTAL DEPARTMENTAL BUDGET REQUESTS	\$	52,772,412
B. CAPITAL BUDGET REQUESTS	\$	901,971
C. ENTERPRISE FUND REQUESTS	\$	3,590,968
D. COMMUNITY PRESERVATION REQUEST		

OTHER AMOUNTS TO BE RAISED

1. Amounts certified for tax title purposes	\$	-
2. Debt and interest charges not included	\$	-
3. Final court judgments	\$	-
4. Total Overlay deficits of prior years	\$	-
5. Total cherry sheet offsets	\$	29,107
6. Revenue deficits	\$	-
7. Offset Receipts	\$	-
8. Authorized deferral of Teachers' Pay	\$	-
9. Snow and Ice deficit	\$	-
10. Other	\$	-

E. TOTAL OTHER AMOUNTS TO BE RAISED	\$	29,107
F. STATE AND COUNTY CHERRY SHEET CHARGES	\$	101,443
G. ALLOWANCE FOR ABATEMENTS AND EXEMPTIONS	\$	150,000

TOTAL PROPOSED EXPENDITURES \$ **57,545,902**

FY 2025 ESTIMATED RECEIPTS

ESTIMATED TAX LEVY

Levy Limit	\$	39,765,540
Debt Exclusion	\$	5,032,590

A. ESTIMATED TAX LEVY	\$	44,798,130
B. CHERRY SHEET ESTIMATED RECEIPTS	\$	1,145,967
C. LOCAL RECEIPTS NOT ALLOCATED	\$	5,627,946
D. OFFSET RECEIPTS	\$	-
E. ENTERPRISE FUNDS	\$	3,906,632
F. COMMUNITY PRESERVATION FUNDS	\$	-
G. FREE CASH	\$	697,960

OTHER AVAILABLE FUNDS

1. Stabilization Fund	\$	-
2. Capital Asset Fund	\$	723,500
3. GDRSD Capital Asset Fund	\$	295,767
4. EMS/Conservation Fund	\$	350,000
5. Bond Surplus Transfer	\$	-
6. Coronavirus Recovery Funds	\$	-

H. OTHER AVAILABLE FUNDS \$ 1,369,267

TOTAL ESTIMATED RECEIPTS \$ **57,545,902**

FY 2025 SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) \$ **0**

APPENDIX A

TOWN OF GROTON FISCAL YEAR 2025

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2023 ACTUAL	FY 2024 APPROPRIATED	FY 2025 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2025 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2025 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2025 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
<u>GENERAL GOVERNMENT</u>							
MODERATOR							
1000	Salaries	\$ 65	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	0.21	0.00%
1001	Expenses	\$ -	\$ 80	\$ 80	\$ 80	0.02	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 65	\$ 1,080	\$ 1,080	\$ 1,080	0.23	0.00%
BOARD OF SELECTMEN							
1020	Salaries	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1021	Wages	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1022	Expenses	\$ 2,960	\$ 11,800	\$ 6,800	\$ 6,800	1.42	0.01%
1023	Engineering/Consultant	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1024	Minor Capital	\$ 25,649	\$ 24,054	\$ 24,054	\$ 24,054	5.03	0.04%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 28,609	\$ 35,854	\$ 30,854	\$ 30,854	6.45	0.06%
TOWN MANAGER							
1030	Salaries	\$ 243,254	\$ 252,064	\$ 258,863	\$ 258,863	54.15	0.48%
1031	Wages	\$ 111,392	\$ 117,005	\$ 141,837	\$ 141,837	29.67	0.26%
1032	Expenses	\$ 14,240	\$ 12,100	\$ 12,100	\$ 12,100	2.53	0.02%
1033	Engineering/Consultant	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1034	Performance Evaluations	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 368,886	\$ 381,169	\$ 412,800	\$ 412,800	86.35	0.77%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2023 ACTUAL	FY 2024 APPROPRIATED	FY 2025 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2025 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2025 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2025 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
FINANCE COMMITTEE							
1040	Expenses	\$ 214	\$ 220	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1041	Reserve Fund	\$ 49,400	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	31.38	0.28%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 49,614	\$ 150,220	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	31.38	0.28%
TOWN ACCOUNTANT							
1050	Salaries	\$ 101,126	\$ 115,615	\$ 118,163	\$ 118,163	24.72	0.22%
1051	Wages	\$ 52,920	\$ 54,491	\$ 56,679	\$ 56,679	11.86	0.11%
1052	Expenses	\$ 40,199	\$ 39,100	\$ 50,523	\$ 50,523	10.57	0.09%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 194,245	\$ 209,206	\$ 225,365	\$ 225,365	47.14	0.42%
BOARD OF ASSESSORS							
1060	Salaries	\$ 85,280	\$ 94,300	\$ 96,186	\$ 96,186	20.12	0.18%
1061	Wages	\$ 65,073	\$ 68,486	\$ 69,829	\$ 69,829	14.61	0.13%
1062	Expenses	\$ 29,012	\$ 47,374	\$ 47,032	\$ 47,032	9.84	0.09%
1063	Legal Expense	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 179,365	\$ 210,160	\$ 213,047	\$ 213,047	44.56	0.39%
TREASURER/TAX COLLECTOR							
1070	Salaries	\$ 141,733	\$ 150,769	\$ 153,977	\$ 153,977	32.21	0.29%
1071	Wages	\$ 74,499	\$ 80,256	\$ 82,940	\$ 82,940	17.35	0.15%
1072	Expenses	\$ 24,546	\$ 26,253	\$ 28,637	\$ 28,637	5.99	0.05%
1073	Tax Title	\$ 500	\$ 7,100	\$ 7,100	\$ 7,100	1.49	0.01%
1074	Bond Cost	\$ 500	\$ 2,300	\$ 2,300	\$ 2,300	0.48	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 241,778	\$ 266,678	\$ 274,954	\$ 274,954	57.51	0.51%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2023 ACTUAL	FY 2024 APPROPRIATED	FY 2025 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2025 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2025 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2025 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
TOWN COUNSEL							
1080	Expenses	\$ 58,577	\$ 90,000	\$ 90,000	\$ 90,000	18.83	0.17%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 58,577	\$ 90,000	\$ 90,000	\$ 90,000	18.83	0.17%
HUMAN RESOURCES							
1090	Salary	\$ 87,983	\$ 94,300	\$ 96,936	\$ 96,936	20.28	0.18%
1091	Expenses	\$ 14,927	\$ 12,400	\$ 12,400	\$ 12,400	2.59	0.02%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 102,910	\$ 106,700	\$ 109,336	\$ 109,336	22.87	0.20%
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY							
1100	Salary	\$ 121,981	\$ 121,627	\$ 124,810	\$ 124,810	26.11	0.23%
1101	Wages	\$ 61,194	\$ 70,261	\$ 73,459	\$ 73,459	15.37	0.14%
1102	Expenses	\$ 21,455	\$ 24,800	\$ 24,800	\$ 24,800	5.19	0.05%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 204,630	\$ 216,688	\$ 223,069	\$ 223,069	46.66	0.41%
GIS STEERING COMMITTEE							
1120	Expenses	\$ 3,000	\$ 8,300	\$ 8,300	\$ 8,300	1.74	0.02%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 3,000	\$ 8,300	\$ 8,300	\$ 8,300	1.74	0.02%
TOWN CLERK							
1130	Salaries	\$ 95,550	\$ 98,472	\$ 98,591	\$ 98,591	20.62	0.18%
1131	Wages	\$ 81,648	\$ 73,125	\$ 81,040	\$ 81,040	16.95	0.15%
1132	Expenses	\$ 9,539	\$ 18,450	\$ 13,900	\$ 13,900	2.91	0.03%
1135	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 186,737	\$ 190,047	\$ 193,531	\$ 193,531	40.48	0.36%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2023 ACTUAL	FY 2024 APPROPRIATED	FY 2025 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2025 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2025 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2025 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
ELECTIONS & BOARD OF REGISTRARS							
1140	Stipend	\$ 27,416	\$ 22,930	\$ 33,053	\$ 33,053	6.91	0.06%
1141	Expenses	\$ 15,597	\$ 22,927	\$ 21,088	\$ 21,088	4.41	0.04%
1142	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 43,013	\$ 45,857	\$ 54,141	\$ 54,141	11.32	0.10%
STREET LISTINGS							
1150	Expenses	\$ 4,818	\$ 5,700	\$ 5,950	\$ 5,950	1.24	0.01%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 4,818	\$ 5,700	\$ 5,950	\$ 5,950	1.24	0.01%
INSURANCE & BONDING							
1160	Insurance & Bonding	\$ 286,667	\$ 320,000	\$ 330,000	\$ 330,000	69.03	0.61%
1161	Insurance Deductible Reserve - Liability	\$ 10,060	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000	2.51	0.02%
1162	Insurance Deductible Reserve - 111F	\$ 3,744	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	5.23	0.05%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 300,471	\$ 357,000	\$ 367,000	\$ 367,000	76.77	0.68%
TOWN REPORT							
1170	Expenses	\$ 1,472	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	0.31	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 1,472	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	0.31	0.00%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2023 ACTUAL	FY 2024 APPROPRIATED	FY 2025 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2025 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2025 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2025 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
POSTAGE/TOWN HALL EXPENSES							
1180	Expenses	\$ 68,297	\$ 65,000	\$ 65,000	\$ 65,000	13.60	0.12%
1181	Telephone Expenses	\$ 15,954	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	6.28	0.06%
1182	Office Supplies	\$ 25,433	\$ 17,000	\$ 17,000	\$ 17,000	3.56	0.03%
<hr/>							
	DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL	\$ 109,684	\$ 112,000	\$ 112,000	\$ 112,000	23.43	0.21%
TOTAL GENERAL GOVERNMENT		\$ 2,077,874	\$ 2,388,159	\$ 2,472,927	\$ 2,472,927	517.27	4.58%

LAND USE DEPARTMENTS

CONSERVATION COMMISSION							
1200	Salary	\$ 73,972	\$ 73,351	\$ 79,070	\$ 79,070	16.54	0.15%
1201	Wages	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1202	Expenses	\$ 4,597	\$ 8,770	\$ 8,270	\$ 8,270	1.73	0.02%
1203	Engineering & Legal	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1204	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
<hr/>							
	DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL	\$ 78,569	\$ 82,121	\$ 87,340	\$ 87,340	18.27	0.16%
PLANNING BOARD							
1210	Salaries	\$ 89,237	\$ 95,922	\$ 97,696	\$ 97,696	20.44	0.18%
1211	Wages	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1212	Expenses	\$ 8,844	\$ 9,950	\$ 9,625	\$ 9,625	2.01	0.02%
1215	M.R.P.C. Assessment	\$ 3,846	\$ 4,200	\$ 4,041	\$ 4,041	0.85	0.01%
1216	Legal Budget	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
<hr/>							
	DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL	\$ 101,927	\$ 110,072	\$ 111,362	\$ 111,362	23.29	0.21%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2023 ACTUAL	FY 2024 APPROPRIATED	FY 2025 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2025 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2025 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2025 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS							
1220	Wages	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1221	Expenses	\$ 50	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,335	\$ 1,335	0.28	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 50	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,335	\$ 1,335	0.28	0.00%
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION							
1230	Wages	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1231	Expenses	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
BUILDING INSPECTOR							
1240	Salaries	\$ 104,758	\$ 104,904	\$ 107,030	\$ 107,030	22.39	0.20%
1241	Wages	\$ 55,067	\$ 61,453	\$ 63,935	\$ 63,935	13.37	0.12%
1242	Expenses	\$ 23,257	\$ 21,750	\$ 24,897	\$ 24,897	5.21	0.05%
1243	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 183,082	\$ 188,107	\$ 195,862	\$ 195,862	40.97	0.36%
MECHANICAL INSPECTOR							
1250	Fee Salaries	\$ 54,800	\$ 39,000	\$ 39,000	\$ 39,000	8.16	0.07%
1251	Expenses	\$ 4,876	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,500	\$ 3,500	0.73	0.01%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 59,676	\$ 43,000	\$ 42,500	\$ 42,500	8.89	0.08%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2023 ACTUAL	FY 2024 APPROPRIATED	FY 2025 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2025 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2025 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2025 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
EARTH REMOVAL INSPECTOR							
1260	Stipend	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	0.52	0.00%
1261	Expenses	\$ -	\$ 200	\$ 300	\$ 300	0.06	0.00%
1262	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 2,500	\$ 2,700	\$ 2,800	\$ 2,800	0.59	0.01%
BOARD OF HEALTH							
1270	Wages	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1271	Expenses	\$ 983	\$ 1,575	\$ 1,575	\$ 1,575	0.33	0.00%
1272	Nursing Services	\$ -	\$ 17,798	\$ 17,798	\$ 17,798	3.72	0.03%
1273	Nashoba Health District	\$ 51,483	\$ 38,833	\$ 43,081	\$ 43,081	9.01	0.08%
1274	Herbert Lipton MH	\$ 8,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1275	Eng/Consult/Landfill Monitoring	\$ 9,133	\$ 10,600	\$ 13,834	\$ 13,834	2.89	0.03%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 69,599	\$ 68,806	\$ 76,288	\$ 76,288	15.96	0.14%
SEALER OF WEIGHTS & MEASURES							
1280	Fee Salaries	\$ 680	\$ 3,200	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1281	Expenses	\$ -	\$ 100	\$ 3,262	\$ 3,262	0.68	0.01%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 680	\$ 3,300	\$ 3,262	\$ 3,262	0.68	0.01%
TOTAL LAND USE DEPARTMENTS		\$ 496,083	\$ 499,606	\$ 520,749	\$ 520,749	108.93	0.97%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2023 ACTUAL	FY 2024 APPROPRIATED	FY 2025 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2025 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2025 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2025 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
<u>PROTECTION OF PERSONS AND PROPERTY</u>							
POLICE DEPARTMENT							
1300	Salaries	\$ 283,207	\$ 286,466	\$ 305,889	\$ 305,889	63.98	0.57%
1301	Wages	\$ 2,067,435	\$ 2,116,748	\$ 2,222,071	\$ 2,222,071	464.80	4.12%
1302	Expenses	\$ 207,915	\$ 215,370	\$ 264,552	\$ 264,552	55.34	0.49%
1303	Lease or Purchase of Cruisers	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	1.05	0.01%
1304	PS Building (Expenses)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1305	Minor Capital	\$ 7,588	\$ 6,420	\$ 12,984	\$ 12,984	2.72	0.02%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 2,571,145	\$ 2,630,004	\$ 2,810,496	\$ 2,810,496	587.88	5.21%
FIRE DEPARTMENT							
1310	Salaries	\$ 256,900	\$ 281,595	\$ 292,712	\$ 292,712	61.23	0.54%
1311	Wages	\$ 1,165,166	\$ 1,112,490	\$ 1,160,261	\$ 1,160,261	242.70	2.15%
1312	Expenses	\$ 202,231	\$ 207,096	\$ 212,146	\$ 212,146	44.38	0.39%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 1,624,297	\$ 1,601,181	\$ 1,665,119	\$ 1,665,119	348.30	3.09%
GROTON WATER FIRE PROTECTION							
1320	West Groton Water District	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1321	Groton Water Department	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
ANIMAL INSPECTOR							
1330	Salary	\$ 2,082	\$ 2,082	\$ 2,082	\$ 2,082	0.44	0.00%
1331	Expenses	\$ 270	\$ 400	\$ 400	\$ 400	0.08	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 2,352	\$ 2,482	\$ 2,482	\$ 2,482	0.52	0.00%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2023 ACTUAL	FY 2024 APPROPRIATED	FY 2025 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2025 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2025 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2025 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER							
1340	Salary	\$ 2,082	\$ 2,082	\$ 2,082	\$ 2,082	0.44	0.00%
1341	Expenses	\$ 270	\$ 400	\$ 400	\$ 400	0.08	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 2,352	\$ 2,482	\$ 2,482	\$ 2,482	0.52	0.00%
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY							
1350	Salary	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	0.84	0.01%
1351	Expenses	\$ 10,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	2.09	0.02%
1352	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 14,000	\$ 44,000	\$ 14,000	\$ 14,000	2.93	0.03%
DOG OFFICER							
1360	Salary	\$ 15,000	\$ 17,500	\$ 17,500	\$ 17,500	3.66	0.03%
1361	Expenses	\$ 2,929	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	0.63	0.01%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 17,929	\$ 20,500	\$ 20,500	\$ 20,500	4.29	0.04%
POLICE & FIRE COMMUNICATIONS							
1370	Wages	\$ 444,288	\$ 448,073	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1371	Expenses	\$ 20,382	\$ 23,875	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1372	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 464,670	\$ 471,948	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
TOTAL PROTECTION OF PERSONS AND PROPERTY		\$ 4,696,745	\$ 4,772,597	\$ 4,515,079	\$ 4,515,079	944.44	8.37%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2023 ACTUAL	FY 2024 APPROPRIATED	FY 2025 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2025 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2025 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2025 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
<u>REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGETS</u>							
NASHOBA VALLEY REGIONAL TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL							
1400	Operating Expenses	\$ 810,037	\$ 762,656	\$ 966,719	\$ 966,719	202.21	1.79%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 810,037	\$ 762,656	\$ 966,719	\$ 966,719	202.21	1.79%
<u>GROTON-DUNSTABLE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT</u>							
1410	Operating Expenses	\$ 24,802,222	\$ 25,937,716	\$ 28,741,942	\$ 28,741,942	6,012.08	53.27%
1411	Debt Service, Excluded	\$ -	\$ 406,982	\$ 384,622	\$ 384,622	80.45	0.71%
1412	Debt Service, Unexcluded	\$ -	\$ 58,814	\$ 60,534	\$ 60,534	12.66	0.11%
1413	Out of District Placement	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1414	Capital Assessment	\$ 577,026	\$ 552,203	\$ 295,767	\$ 295,767	61.87	0.55%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 25,379,248	\$ 26,955,715	\$ 29,482,865	\$ 29,482,865	6,167.07	54.64%
TOTAL SCHOOLS		\$ 26,189,285	\$ 27,718,371	\$ 30,449,584	\$ 30,449,584	6,369.28	56.44%

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

1500	Salaries	\$ 120,670	\$ 120,293	\$ 122,664	\$ 122,664	25.66	0.23%
1501	Wages	\$ 750,224	\$ 743,323	\$ 753,789	\$ 753,789	157.67	1.40%
1502	Expenses	\$ 136,529	\$ 136,900	\$ 136,900	\$ 136,900	28.64	0.25%
1503	Highway Maintenance	\$ 81,712	\$ 80,000	\$ 80,000	\$ 80,000	16.73	0.15%
1504	Minor Capital	\$ 5,526	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	3.14	0.03%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 1,094,661	\$ 1,095,516	\$ 1,108,353	\$ 1,108,353	231.84	2.05%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2023 ACTUAL	FY 2024 APPROPRIATED	FY 2025 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2025 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2025 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2025 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
STREET LIGHTS							
1510	Expenses	\$ 12,202	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	3.14	0.03%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 12,202	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	3.14	0.03%
SNOW AND ICE							
1520	Expenses	\$ 171,937	\$ 165,000	\$ 165,000	\$ 165,000	34.51	0.31%
1521	Overtime	\$ 268,100	\$ 140,000	\$ 140,000	\$ 140,000	29.28	0.26%
1522	Hired Equipment	\$ 45,349	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000	7.32	0.06%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 485,386	\$ 340,000	\$ 340,000	\$ 340,000	71.12	0.63%
TREE WARDEN BUDGET							
1530	Salary	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1531	Expenses	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	0.63	0.01%
1532	Trees	\$ -	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	0.31	0.00%
1533	Tree Work	\$ 9,515	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	6.28	0.06%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 12,515	\$ 34,500	\$ 34,500	\$ 34,500	7.22	0.06%
MUNICIPAL BUILDING AND PROPERTY MAINTENANCE							
1540	Wages	\$ 156,174	\$ 166,348	\$ 162,845	\$ 162,845	34.06	0.30%
1541	Expenses	\$ 257,888	\$ 270,950	\$ 270,950	\$ 270,950	56.68	0.50%
1542	Minor Capital	\$ 9,849	\$ -	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	5.23	0.05%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 423,911	\$ 437,298	\$ 458,795	\$ 458,795	95.97	0.85%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2023 ACTUAL	FY 2024 APPROPRIATED	FY 2025 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2025 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2025 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2025 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL							
1550	Wages	\$ 145,954	\$ 154,315	\$ 157,651	\$ 157,651	32.98	0.29%
1551	Expenses	\$ 38,661	\$ 45,686	\$ 45,686	\$ 45,686	9.56	0.08%
1552	Tipping Fees	\$ 139,668	\$ 145,000	\$ 145,000	\$ 145,000	30.33	0.27%
1553	North Central SW Coop	\$ 5,850	\$ 5,850	\$ 5,850	\$ 5,850	1.22	0.01%
1554	Minor Capital	\$ 4,717	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	1.05	0.01%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 334,850	\$ 355,851	\$ 359,187	\$ 359,187	75.13	0.67%
PARKS DEPARTMENT							
1560	Wages	\$ 13,804	\$ 17,571	\$ 17,922	\$ 17,922	3.75	0.03%
1561	Expenses	\$ 55,272	\$ 55,759	\$ 55,759	\$ 55,759	11.66	0.10%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 69,076	\$ 73,330	\$ 73,681	\$ 73,681	15.41	0.14%
TOTAL DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS		\$ 2,432,601	\$ 2,351,495	\$ 2,389,516	\$ 2,389,516	499.83	4.43%
<u>LIBRARY AND CITIZEN'S SERVICES</u>							
COUNCIL ON AGING							
1600	Salaries	\$ 87,986	\$ 87,446	\$ 162,023	\$ 162,023	33.89	0.30%
1601	Wages	\$ 116,035	\$ 103,143	\$ 55,733	\$ 55,733	11.66	0.10%
1602	Expenses	\$ 12,384	\$ 12,254	\$ 12,700	\$ 12,700	2.66	0.02%
1603	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 216,405	\$ 202,843	\$ 230,456	\$ 230,456	48.21	0.43%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2023 ACTUAL	FY 2024 APPROPRIATED	FY 2025 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2025 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2025 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2025 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
SENIOR CENTER VAN							
1610	Wages	\$ 62,342	\$ 74,808	\$ 76,611	\$ 76,611	16.03	0.14%
1611	Expenses	\$ 16,823	\$ 18,023	\$ 21,023	\$ 21,023	4.40	0.04%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 79,165	\$ 92,831	\$ 97,634	\$ 97,634	20.42	0.18%
VETERAN'S SERVICE OFFICER							
1620	Salary	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,120	\$ 6,242	\$ 6,242	1.31	0.01%
1621	Expenses	\$ -	\$ 1,100	\$ 1,100	\$ 1,100	0.23	0.00%
1622	Veterans' Benefits	\$ 18,919	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	5.23	0.05%
1623	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENT TOTAL		\$ 24,919	\$ 32,220	\$ 32,342	\$ 32,342	6.77	0.06%
GRAVES REGISTRATION							
1630	Salary/Stipend	\$ 250	\$ 250	\$ 250	\$ 250	0.05	0.00%
1631	Expenses	\$ 750	\$ 760	\$ 760	\$ 760	0.16	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 1,000	\$ 1,010	\$ 1,010	\$ 1,010	0.21	0.00%
CARE OF VETERAN GRAVES							
1640	Contract Expenses	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	0.31	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	0.31	0.00%
OLD BURYING GROUND COMMITTEE							
1650	Expenses	\$ -	\$ 800	\$ 800	\$ 800	0.17	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ -	\$ 800	\$ 800	\$ 800	0.17	0.00%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2023 ACTUAL	FY 2024 APPROPRIATED	FY 2025 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2025 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2025 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2025 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
LIBRARY							
1660	Salary	\$ 426,346	\$ 441,807	\$ 453,630	\$ 453,630	94.89	0.84%
1661	Wages	\$ 331,618	\$ 317,104	\$ 355,706	\$ 355,706	74.40	0.66%
1662	Expenses	\$ 214,238	\$ 226,873	\$ 219,966	\$ 219,966	46.01	0.41%
1663	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 972,202	\$ 985,784	\$ 1,029,302	\$ 1,029,302	215.30	1.91%
COMMEMORATIONS & CELEBRATIONS							
1670	Expenses	\$ 263	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	0.10	0.00%
1671	Fireworks	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 263	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	0.10	0.00%
WATER SAFETY							
1680	Wages	\$ 2,520	\$ 4,560	\$ 4,560	\$ 4,560	0.95	0.01%
1681	Expenses and Minor Capital	\$ 2,887	\$ 4,683	\$ 4,683	\$ 4,683	0.98	0.01%
1682	Property Maint. & Improvements	\$ 9,000	\$ 9,000	\$ 10,900	\$ 10,900	2.28	0.02%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 14,407	\$ 18,243	\$ 20,143	\$ 20,143	4.21	0.04%
WEED MANAGEMENT							
1690	Wages	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1691	Expenses: Weed Harvester	\$ 22,000	\$ 22,000	\$ 22,000	\$ 22,000	4.60	0.04%
1692	Expenses: Great Lakes	\$ 12,001	\$ 12,385	\$ 12,385	\$ 12,385	2.59	0.02%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 34,001	\$ 34,385	\$ 34,385	\$ 34,385	7.19	0.06%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2023 ACTUAL	FY 2024 APPROPRIATED	FY 2025 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2025 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2025 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2025 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
GROTON COUNTRY CLUB							
1700	Salary	\$ 170,866	\$ 172,675	\$ 177,727	\$ 177,727	37.18	0.33%
1701	Wages	\$ 234,595	\$ 237,305	\$ 243,941	\$ 243,941	51.03	0.45%
1702	Expenses	\$ 193,969	\$ 167,774	\$ 167,774	\$ 167,774	35.09	0.31%
1703	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 599,430	\$ 577,754	\$ 589,442	\$ 589,442	123.30	1.09%
LOCAL ACCESS CABLE DEPARTMENT							
1710	Salaries	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 71,048	\$ 71,048	14.86	0.13%
1711	Wages	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 61,219	\$ 61,219	12.81	0.11%
1712	Expenses	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 18,175	\$ 18,175	3.80	0.03%
1713	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	1.05	0.01%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ -	\$ -	\$ 155,442	\$ 155,442	32.51	0.29%
TOTAL LIBRARY AND CITIZEN SERVICES		\$ 1,943,292	\$ 1,947,870	\$ 2,192,957	\$ 2,192,957	458.71	4.06%
<u>DEBT SERVICE</u>							
DEBT SERVICE							
2000	Long Term Debt - Principal Excluded	\$ 2,267,786	\$ 1,870,000	\$ 2,025,000	\$ 2,025,000	423.58	3.75%
2001	Long Term Debt - Principal Non-Excluded	\$ -	\$ 153,506	\$ 165,000	\$ 165,000	34.51	0.31%
2002	Long Term Debt - Interest - Excluded	\$ 1,332,573	\$ 1,418,852	\$ 1,340,252	\$ 1,340,252	280.35	2.48%
2003	Long Term Debt - Interest - Non-Excluded	\$ -	\$ 77,474	\$ 110,364	\$ 110,364	23.09	0.20%
2004	Short Term Debt - Principal - Town	\$ -	\$ 212,949	\$ 123,526	\$ 123,526	25.84	0.23%
2005A	Short Term Debt - Interest - Non Excluded	\$ 13,803	\$ 30,676	\$ 8,644	\$ 8,644	1.81	0.02%
2005B	Short Term Debt - Interest - Excluded	\$ -	\$ 1,038,105	\$ 1,283,825	\$ 1,283,825	268.54	2.38%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 3,614,162	\$ 4,801,562	\$ 5,056,611	\$ 5,056,611	1,057.71	9.37%
TOTAL DEBT SERVICE		\$ 3,614,162	\$ 4,801,562	\$ 5,056,611	\$ 5,056,611	1,057.71	9.37%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2023 ACTUAL	FY 2024 APPROPRIATED	FY 2025 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2025 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2025 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2025 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
<u>EMPLOYEE BENEFITS</u>							
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS							
GENERAL BENEFITS							
3000	County Retirement	\$ 2,538,910	\$ 2,494,280	\$ 2,653,019	\$ 2,653,019	\$ 554.94	4.92%
3001	State Retirement	\$ 177,094	\$ 185,000	\$ 190,000	\$ 190,000	\$ 39.74	0.35%
3002	Unemployment Compensation	\$ 195,465	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 2.09	0.02%
INSURANCE							
3010	Health Insurance/Employee Expenses	\$ 1,811,069	\$ 2,090,563	\$ 2,161,151	\$ 2,161,151	\$ 452.06	4.01%
3011	Life Insurance	\$ 3,642	\$ 3,820	\$ 3,820	\$ 3,820	\$ 0.80	0.01%
3012	Medicare/Social Security	\$ 153,710	\$ 147,000	\$ 157,000	\$ 157,000	\$ 32.84	0.29%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 4,879,890	\$ 4,930,663	\$ 5,174,990	\$ 5,174,990	1,082.48	9.59%
TOTAL EMPLOYEE BENEFITS		\$ 4,879,890	\$ 4,930,663	\$ 5,174,990	\$ 5,174,990	1,082.48	9.59%
<u>ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS</u>							
ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS							
	Capital Budget Request	\$ 663,000	\$ 800,142	\$ 901,971	\$ 901,971	\$ 188.67	1.67%
	Offset Receipts	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0.00%
	Cherry Sheet Offsets	\$ 25,054	\$ 29,051	\$ 29,107	\$ 27,107	\$ 6.09	0.05%
	Snow and Ice Deficit	\$ 168,040	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0.00%
	State and County Charges	\$ 95,249	\$ 98,662	\$ 101,443	\$ 101,443	\$ 21.22	0.19%
	Allowance for Abatements/Exemptions	\$ 43,020	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 31.38	0.28%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 994,363	\$ 1,077,855	\$ 1,182,521	\$ 1,180,521	247.35	2.19%
GRAND TOTAL - TOWN BUDGET		\$ 47,324,294	\$ 50,488,178	\$ 53,954,933	\$ 53,952,933	11,286	100.00%

FY 2025 ENTERPRISE FUND BUDGETS

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2021 ACTUAL	FY 2022 ACTUAL	FY 2023 ACTUAL	FY 2024 APPROPRIATED	FY 2025 DEPARTMENT REQUEST	FY 2025 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	PERCENT CHANGE
WATER DEPARTMENT								
	WD Salaries	\$ 151,444	\$ 152,121	\$ 163,248	\$ 166,505	\$ 176,650	\$ 176,650	6.09%
	WD Wages	\$ 186,050	\$ 255,303	\$ 269,339	\$ 278,587	\$ 300,075	\$ 300,075	7.71%
	WD Expenses	\$ 499,510	\$ 526,019	\$ 573,697	\$ 737,900	\$ 637,300	\$ 637,300	-13.63%
	WD Debt Service	\$ 361,977	\$ 369,185	\$ 478,239	\$ 907,830	\$ 1,196,241	\$ 1,196,241	31.77%
100	DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL	\$ 1,198,981	\$ 1,302,628	\$ 1,484,523	\$ 2,090,822	\$ 2,310,267	\$ 2,310,267	10.50%
SEWER DEPARTMENT								
	Sewer Salaries	\$ 20,488	\$ 21,579	\$ 23,104	\$ 22,623	\$ 24,300	\$ 24,300	7.41%
	Sewer Wages	\$ 50,727	\$ 51,737	\$ 45,907	\$ 49,872	\$ 57,195	\$ 57,195	14.68%
	Sewer Expense	\$ 534,552	\$ 683,919	\$ 781,027	\$ 783,578	\$ 1,142,338	\$ 1,142,338	45.78%
	Sewer Debt Service	\$ 5,504	\$ 5,316	\$ 5,099	\$ 33,426	\$ 26,642	\$ 26,642	-20.30%
200	DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL	\$ 611,271	\$ 762,551	\$ 855,137	\$ 889,499	\$ 1,250,475	\$ 1,250,475	40.58%
FOUR CORNERS SEWER DEPARTMENT								
	Four Corners Sewer Salaries	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,361	\$ 2,700	\$ 2,700	100.00%
	Four Corners Sewer Wages	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,683	\$ 5,541	\$ 6,355	\$ 6,355	14.68%
	Four Corners Sewer Expense	\$ 37,903	\$ 54,555	\$ 128,224	\$ 69,909	\$ 88,985	\$ 88,985	27.29%
	Four Corners Sewer Debt Service	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0.00%
300	DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL	\$ 37,903	\$ 54,555	\$ 135,907	\$ 77,811	\$ 98,040	\$ 98,040	26.00%
LOCAL ACCESS CABLE DEPARTMENT								
	Cable Salaries	\$ 93,104	\$ 69,975	\$ 69,290	\$ 69,656	\$ -	\$ -	-100.00%
	Cable Wages	\$ 55,272	\$ 55,827	\$ 62,574	\$ 58,510	\$ -	\$ -	-100.00%
	Cable Expenses	\$ 58,737	\$ 52,535	\$ 85,774	\$ 91,971	\$ -	\$ -	-100.00%
	Cable Minor Capital	\$ 2,357	\$ 5,000	\$ -	\$ 10,000	\$ -	\$ -	-100.00%
400	DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL	\$ 209,470	\$ 183,337	\$ 217,638	\$ 230,137	\$ -	\$ -	-100.00%
STORMWATER UTILITY								
	Stormwater Wages/Benefits	\$ 31,330	\$ 74,091	\$ 77,629	\$ 79,520	\$ 84,851	\$ 84,851	6.70%
	Stormwater Expenses	\$ 27,537	\$ 57,416	\$ 81,441	\$ 112,000	\$ 112,000	\$ 112,000	0.00%
	Stormwater Capital Outlay	\$ -	\$ 42,201	\$ 51,000	\$ 51,000	\$ 51,000	\$ 51,000	0.00%
500	DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL	\$ 58,867	\$ 173,708	\$ 210,070	\$ 242,520	\$ 247,851	\$ 247,851	2.20%
TOTAL ENTERPRISE FUNDS		\$ 2,116,492	\$ 2,476,779	\$ 2,903,275	\$ 3,530,790	\$ 3,906,632	\$ 3,906,632	10.64%

APPENDIX B

FACTOR: 1.0200

**Town of Groton Personnel By-Law
Wage and Classification Schedule
Fiscal Year 2025 (Effective July 1, 2024)**

Grade	Position Title	Low	High
4	Salary	42,288	52,333
	Wages	20.36	25.14
5	Salary	44,703	54,192
	Wages	21.51	26.60
7	Salary	51,690	65,474
	Wages	25.45	31.48
8	Salary	58,680	72,656
	Wages	28.21	34.93
9	Salary	60,093	74,361
	Wages	28.90	35.75
10	Salary Executive Assistant to Town Manager	68,919	86,985
	Wages	33.15	41.82
11	Salary	71,912	91,625
	Wages	34.57	44.05
12	Salary Human Resources Director	74,264	93,844
	Wages	35.70	45.18

APPENDIX B
Town of Groton Personnel By-Law
Wage and Classification Schedule
Fiscal Year 2025 (Effective July 1, 2024)

FACTOR: 1.0200

Grade	Position Title	Low	High
13	Salary	76,916	97,624
	Wages	36.98	46.93
14	Salary	78,550	99,412
	Wages	37.76	47.79
15	Salary	81,095	100,321
	Wages	38.99	48.23
16	Salary	84,025	106,000
	Wages	40.40	50.96
17	Salary	94,135	116,453
	Wages	45.28	55.99
18	Salary	101,801	125,986
	IT Director Wages	48.94	60.57
19	Salary	104,474	129,271
	Wages	50.23	62.15
20	Salary	112,022	137,771
	Wages	53.86	66.23

APPENDIX B
NON-CLASSIFIED, TEMPORARY SEASONAL AND STIPEND POSITIONS

NON-STEP AND STIPEND POSITIONS

FIRE/EMS DEPARTMENT

Call Captain: Fire	26.66
Call Lieutenant: Fire	26.12
Call Firefighter	22.86
Call Emergency Medical Technician	22.86
Probationary Firefighter	19.04
Probationary Emergency Medical Technician	19.04
Call Fire Mechanic	63.98

Country Club Seasonal Employees

Pro Shop Staff	MW *- 19.00
Pool Staff	MW - 19.00
Lifeguards	MW - 20.00
Swim Coaches	MW - 25.00
Camp Staff	MW - 19.00
Counselors	MW - 20.00
Buildings & Grounds	MW - 29.00
Library Shelves	MW - 20.00

MISCELLANEOUS

Veteran's Agent	6,000
Earth Removal Inspector	2,500
Dog Officer	17,500
Animal Inspector	2,082
Animal Control Officer	2,082
Town Diarist	1.00
Keeper of the Town Clock	1.00
Per Diem Van Driver	19.51 - 21.96
Park Ranger	Minimum Wage
Graves Registration Officer	250
Emergency Management Director	4,000
Election Worker: Warden	Minimum Wage
Election Worker: Precinct Clerk	Minimum Wage
Election Worker: Inspectors (Checker)	Minimum Wage

* - Minimum Wage

OVERRIDE INFORMATION

Prepared by Groton Town Manager, Mark Haddad

BUDGET AND OVERRIDE HISTORY

The last time the Town of Groton passed an Operational Override of Proposition 2½ was in 2003 in the amount of \$1,004,427. The Town has been able to avoid an override since 2003 through diligent effort and multiple strategic measures including:

- Regionalization of services
- Sharing workload across various departments
- Consolidating positions (Number of employees at Town Hall have been reduced by 25% since 2008)
- Developing new sources of revenue, including:
 - -Local Room Occupancy Tax
 - -Local Meals Tax
 - -New PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) payments, such as Groton Hill Music’s Community Fund
 - -Seeking increased PILOTs from the Town’s non-profit partners
 - -Strategic Use of the Excess and Deficiency Fund to cover Operating Costs by the Groton Dunstable Regional School District
 - -Increasing Building Department Fees (including Building Permits, Electrical Permits and Plumbing Permits).
 - -Increasing Fees at the Transfer Station (Permit and PAYT Bag Fees).

NON-PROPERTY TAX SOURCES OF REVENUE

The following is a summary of new local revenues gained by the Town since FY 2022:

	<u>FY 2020</u>	<u>FY 2021</u>	<u>FY 2022</u>	<u>FY 2023</u>	<u>Four Year Percentage Increase</u>	<u>Four Year Total</u>
Local Meals Tax	\$ 172,096	\$ 144,283	\$ 215,759	\$ 242,074	40.66%	\$ 774,212
Local Room Occupancy Tax	\$ 45,994	\$ 36,958	\$ 136,445	\$ 174,676	279.78%	\$ 394,073
Excise Taxes	\$ 1,781,243	\$ 1,835,724	\$ 1,843,246	\$ 1,927,790	8.23%	\$ 7,388,003
PILOTS	\$ 242,168	\$ 399,707	\$ 298,231	\$ 361,853	49.42%	\$ 1,301,959
Fees	\$ 340,328	\$ 429,273	\$ 428,207	\$ 420,806	23.65%	\$ 1,618,614
Licenses and Permits	\$ 455,235	\$ 465,011	\$ 537,500	\$ 800,579	75.86%	\$ 2,258,325
Country Club Revenue	\$ 323,711	\$ 661,208	\$ 739,701	\$ 793,769	145.21%	\$ 2,518,389

PROPOSITION 2 1/2 BASICS

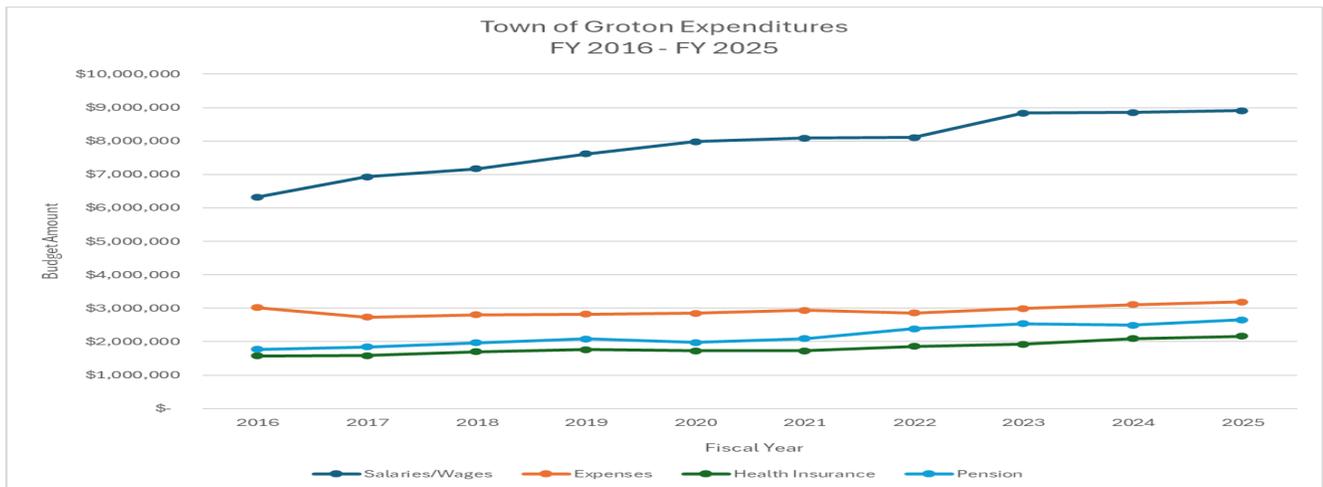
The Town is allowed to increase the levy limit each year by 2½%, plus new growth, which varies each year to a total increase of between 3.5% and 4.5%. The following Chart shows the increase in the Levy Limit since Fiscal Year 2014:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Levy Limit</u>	<u>Percentage Increase</u>
2014	\$ 24,895,001	-
2015	\$ 26,002,556	4.45%
2016	\$ 27,029,638	3.95%
2017	\$ 28,151,493	4.15%
2018	\$ 29,360,225	4.29%
2019	\$ 30,650,535	4.39%
2020	\$ 31,932,418	4.18%
2021	\$ 32,985,370	3.30%
2022	\$ 34,157,624	3.55%
2023	\$ 35,383,886	3.59%
2024	\$ 36,832,663	4.09%

During the COVID years (FY 2021 - FY 2023), the Town’s revenues were severely impacted and growth in the levy was not enough to maintain the services provided. This loss in local revenues was made up through Federal Funding (CARES Act, ARPA and ESSER II). Those Federal Funds are no longer available.

CONTROLLING COSTS

The Town of Groton has consistently worked to control costs over the last ten years. The following chart shows overall budget growth since FY 2016, broken down by Salaries/Wages, Expenses, Health Insurance and Pension:



KEEPING PACE WITH INFLATION AND RISING COSTS

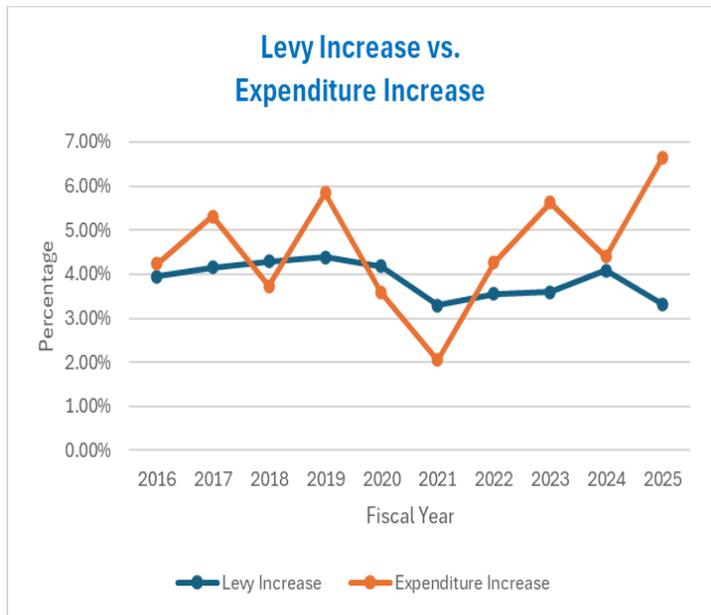
The following Chart shows the percentage increase in the Municipal Budget since FY 2017:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Percentage Increase</u>
2017	3.19%
2018	4.20%
2019	4.70%
2020	1.75%
2021	2.13%
2022	2.44%
2023	7.12%
2024	1.56%
2025	2.23%

The amount of revenues the Town receives does not keep up with inflation or the level of expenditures. Please see the following comparison Charts that includes the Assessment of the Groton Dunstable Regional School District:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Percentage Levy Increase</u>	<u>Percentage Expenditure Increase</u>	<u>Difference</u>
2016	3.95%	4.24%	-0.29%
2017	4.15%	5.32%	-1.17%
2018	4.29%	3.74%	0.55%
2019	4.39%	5.85%	-1.46%
2020	4.18%	3.58%	0.60%
2021	3.30%	2.05%	1.25%
2022	3.55%	4.26%	-0.71%
2023	3.59%	5.63%	-2.04%
2024	4.09%	4.40%	-0.31%
2025	3.32%	6.64%	-3.32%

Federal Funding Supported Operating Budget of GDRSD



CREATING THE TOWN'S BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025

Each year, the Town Manager is required by our Charter to present a Five-Year Budget Projection. Starting in FY 2022, the Town projected the following deficits over the ensuing five years:

FY 2022	\$3,750,000
FY 2023	\$4,200,000
FY 2024	\$3,300,000
FY 2025	\$8,000,000

Projections of the future are extremely difficult to develop with precision and are based on the best information available at the time. Federal Pandemic Era funding kept the Town's Budget balanced without an override in Fiscal Year 2022 and Fiscal Year 2023.

After the Federal Pandemic funding ended, creating a balanced budget for Fiscal Year 2024 Budget was very difficult, and only became possible when

- The Municipal Budget was reduced by \$240,000 (including cutting a Communications Officer, eliminating funding at the Library for various programs and cutting all minor capital expenses).
- The School District Operating Budget was reduced by \$1.0 million (including cutting an Assistant Principal at the High School, a guidance counselor and not filling teacher positions caused by retirement)
- Further reductions to the School District Budget were avoided when the School Committee voted to increase the use of their Excess and Deficiency Fund (\$950k) to balance the budget and retain services.

In the spring of 2023, the Finance Committee and Select Board foresaw that creating the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget would be even more difficult, and that an Override might be needed. The Town Manager gathered the Tri-Com Committee of Select Board, Finance Committee, and School Committee members to conduct an in-depth review of concrete data including:

- local budget drivers
- historical review of (non-property tax) revenues
- anticipated new growth
- fixed annual costs such as utilities and insurance.

After six months of work, this group concluded that the town's revenues from property taxes, state aid, and all other revenue sources would not cover the cost of a budget to maintain level services for the 2024-2025 Fiscal Year. A deficit of \$3.9 million was predicted in September, 2023.

ADDRESSING THE SHORTFALL IN FY2025

To reduce the projected deficit for Fiscal Year 2025, the Town and School District explored every possible suggestion to reduce costs and maximize efficiency. Some of the actions taken by the Town of Groton and the Groton Dunstable Regional School District include:

- Regionalized Emergency Dispatch (starting July 1, 2024)
- Curtailed Health Insurance Plans for Town employees to Reduce Expenses (as of July 1, 2024)
- Eliminated and/or combined positions to save money and improve efficiency at the Groton Dunstable Regional School District
- Continued use of some of the School District's Excess and Deficiency Fund
- Delaying the elimination of Full Day Kindergarten Fees

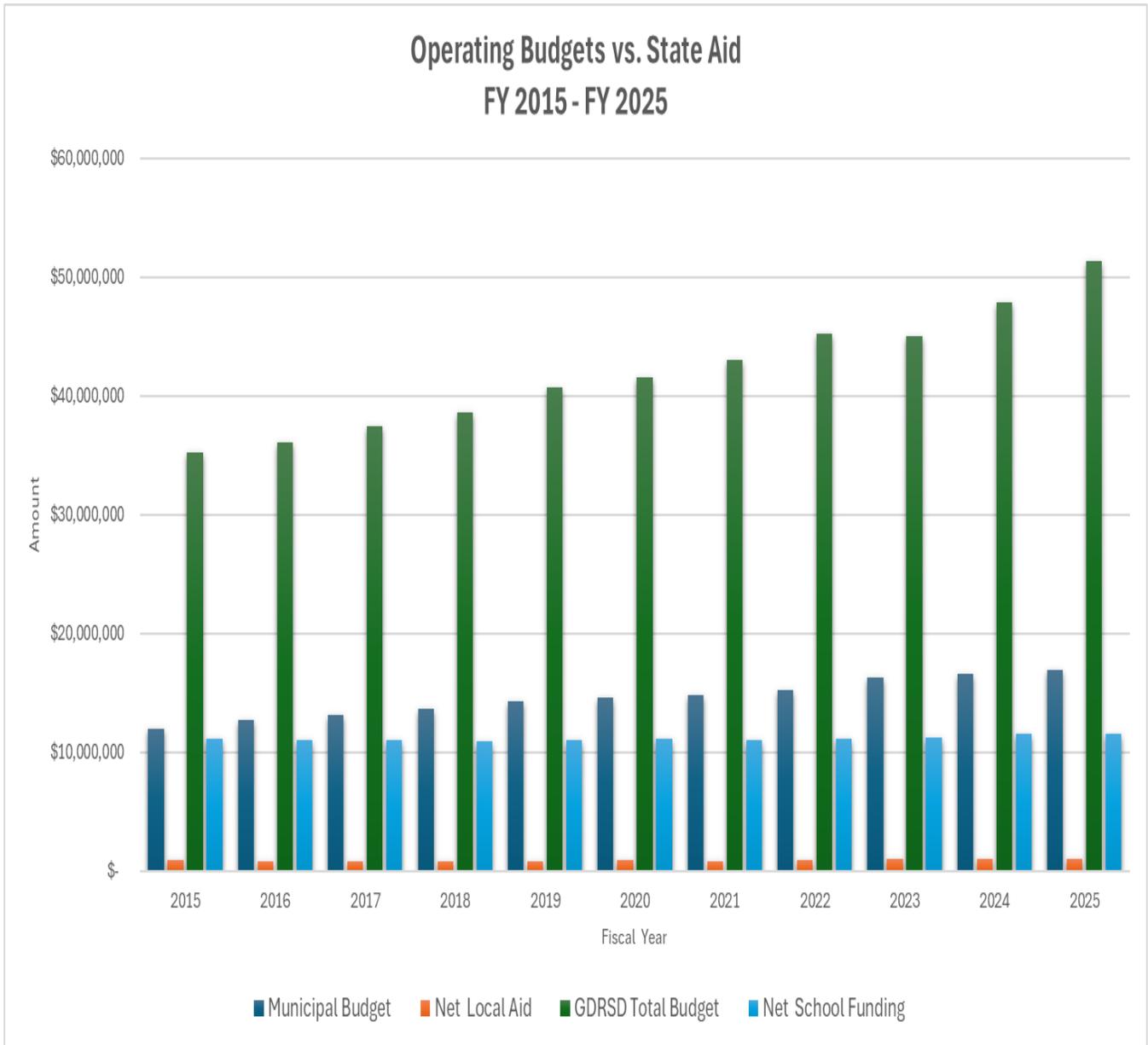
Even with these reductions, Groton faces a significant Budget Deficit in FY 2025 because of the following factors:

- Proposition 2½ does not keep up with inflationary budget pressures.
- Lack of support from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for Education Funding for the Groton Dunstable Regional School District (GDRSD)
- Pandemic-related Federal Funding that was used to balance the Budget in FY 2022 and FY 2023 (CARES Act, ARPA, ESSER II) is no longer available.
- Using the GDRSD Excess and Deficiency Fund for operating costs is not sustainable.
- Required increases in the Middlesex Country Retirement Assessment (6.5%), Health Insurance (10%), Residential and Private School Tuitions (12.75% each), Utilities (10%) and Wages (currently under negotiations).

In order to address the deficit, the Select Board, Finance Committee, and Groton-Dunstable Regional School District Committee have all voted to seek an Override of Proposition 2½. The amount requested, \$5.5 million, determined by the Select Board, will be spread over three years. This amount will keep our Town and School District functioning at their current level of service, without adding any new programs.

THE ROLE OF STATE AID IN GROTON'S BUDGET

The following chart shows what the Town of Groton and the Groton Dunstable Regional School District have received in State Aid Since FY 2015, vs. the Actual Budget:



Municipal and District Officials have met with the Town’s State Delegation, Senators Cronin and Kennedy, and Representatives Scarsdale and Cena, to seek additional State Funding. Support from the Commonwealth has been essentially flat for the last ten years, and unfortunately, the delegation did not see any additional funding available for the foreseeable future.

WHAT WILL BE CUT IF THE OVERRIDE DOES NOT PASS

Without an Override, the only choice for the Town and School District will be to cut \$1,719,260 from the Proposed FY 2025 Operating Budget. Positions within the Town's Public Safety and Highway Departments will be eliminated, services will be reduced at the Library and the Groton Dunstable Regional School District will eliminate more than 50 full-time positions.

HOW TO VOTE

Town Meeting – The Proposed Fiscal Year 2025 Operating Budget will be presented to the 2024 Spring Town Meeting under Article 5. The meeting will be held at the Groton Dunstable Middle School Performing Arts Center on Tuesday, March 26, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Special Election – A Special Election will be held on Tuesday, April 2, 2024 to consider the following question:

“Shall the Town of Groton be allowed to assess an additional \$5,500,000 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purposes of funding the operating budget of the Town and the Assessment of the Groton Dunstable Regional School District for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024?”

Polls will be open from 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM

Polling Locations:

- Precinct 1: Groton Center, 163 West Main Street (Route 225)
- Precinct 2: Groton Dunstable Middle School South, 344 Main Street
- Precinct 3: Groton Dunstable Middle School South, 344 Main Street

Vote by Mail Ballots & Absentee Ballots

- Vote by Mail ballots are available for the Special Election.
- The last day and hour to request a **ballot by mail** is Tuesday, March 26, 2024 by 5:00 PM.
- Vote by Mail Ballots **must be received** by the Clerk's office by the close of polls (8:00 PM) on Tuesday, April 2, 2024. Ballots can be left in the drop box outside the back door of Town Hall or hand delivered to the Clerk's Office.
- The last day and hour to vote by **Absentee Ballot in person** is Monday, April 1, 2024 by 12:00 PM.
- Please allow time for mailing or be prepared to vote at the Polls on Election Day.

- **In-Person Early Voting**

- In-Person Early Voting is available for the Special Election at the Town Clerk’s Office, 173 Main Street.
- The Hours as are follows:
 - Saturday March 23 9AM to 3PM
 - Monday March 25 8AM to 7PM
 - Tuesday March 26 8AM to 4PM
 - Wednesday March 27 8AM to 4PM
 - Thursday March 28 8AM to 4PM
 - Friday March 29 8AM to 1PM

Residents with questions concerning the Override should contact Town Manager Mark Haddad either by email at townmanager@grotonma.gov or by phone at 978-448-1111.

Background

To maximize the strengths of the region, overcome limiting factors, and promote the vitality and offerings of the communities in the 1st Middlesex District, a group of motivated citizens representing a variety of community perspectives began to meet in the summer of 2023.

Before convening, group members and community organizations were focused on their respective missions rather than the mission of the region. The group came together to form a collaborative to enhance livability through increased tourism, infrastructure improvements, and commerce. The collective efforts aim to enhance job opportunities, expand housing, and foster joint efforts to improve the economic conditions of the district.

Vision of the Collaborative

The 1st Middlesex District communities are destinations thriving with opportunities for recreation, arts and culture, culinary experiences, business growth, employment, education, and tourism.

Mission of the Collaborative

The mission of the collaborative is to use the collective strengths of the individual communities to create a thriving district where shared energy, enthusiasm, commitment, and foresight help overcome limiting factors in the district.

Goals

- Improve the economic viability of the district
- Develop and promote joint projects (infrastructure, arts/culture)
- Increase tourism
- Increase housing opportunities
- Support current, and attract new businesses
- Secure funding

Purpose of the MOU

This MOU defines the relationship between partners from 1st Middlesex district communities of Ashby, Townsend, Lunenburg, Groton, Pepperell, and Dunstable.

Statement of Mutual Benefit

The communities, non-profits, businesses, elected and appointed officials, and the individuals in the collaborative each have separate missions, visions, and goals to which they are committed. However, in the collaborative, participants realize that each mission relies on the shared commitment, responsibility, and vision of the group.

These responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Active participation in meetings.
- Follow-up on tasks/assignments.
- Providing data and input as needed.
- Assist with seeking resources for the District.
-

Description of Partners

Partners represent a variety of entities (currently in an unofficial fashion) to include but not be limited to:

- Municipal, and state elected and appointed officials.
- Non-profit entities.
- Businesses.
- Residents.

Fiscal Obligation

There is no fiscal obligation to be part of the group, however, fundraising may be required to reach a goal.

The group is not a government entity or 501c3 charity organization, but just an ad hoc assembled group.

Should fiscal oversight be required, an appropriate entity will be selected as a pass-through.

While the goal is to identify resources and projects for the group, participants understand that due to regulations from funders, all communities might not be included in a specific project.

Recognize that other organizations may be involved, but are not listed as partners, and maybe required to assist in endeavors critical to the purposes of this MOU under separate formal arrangements. Such assistance may include but not be limited to: managing funds, writing grant applications, professional services, providing consultation, education, and facilitation.

Terms of MOU

The term of this MOU is for 1 year from the effective date of this agreement and may be extended upon written mutual agreement.

Given the speed at which the group was organized, the group focus might change.

This MOU will be reviewed annually to ensure that it is fulfilling its purpose and to make any necessary revisions.

Authority

The signing of this MOU is not a formal undertaking with sanctions, but rather a commitment.

By placing your signature below, it implies that you will strive to engage in programs and practices to support economic development through the collaborative.

On behalf of the organization or community I represent, I affirm that I wish to sign this MOU and contribute to the further development of the collaborative.

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 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; Senator John Cronin; Senator Edward Kennedy, Representative Margaret Scarsdale; Representative Danillo Sena; Laura Chesson, Groton Dunstable Regional School District Superintendent; Sherry Kersey, GDRSD Director of Business and Finance; Jason Silva, Dunstable Town Administrator; Hannah Moller, Treasurer/Tax Collector; Patricia DuFresne, Assistant Director of Finance/Town Accountant; Megan Foster, Principal Assessor; Dawn Dunbar, Town Clerk; Melisa Doig, Human Resources Director

Finance Committee Members: Bud Robertson; Mary Linskey; Michael Sulprizio; Gary Green

GDRSD School Committee Members: Fay Raynor; Brian LeBlanc; Catherine Awa; Rafael Glod

Dunstable Selectmen Members: Leah Basbanes, Kieran Meehan

Dunstable Advisory Board: Jake Lewon, Matthew Naughton

Mr. Cunningham called the Groton Select Board meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Mr. Kieran Meehan called the Dunstable Board of Selectmen meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NONE

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

NONE

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Approve and Sign Bonds for Water Debt and BAN for Various Projects.

Ms. Hannah Moller, Treasurer/Tax Collector, was in attendance for the discussion.

Mr. Haddad explained that the Town went to the Bond Market the previous week for funds for the Whitney Pond Well #3, the Manganese Water Treatment Facility, and the new Fire Truck (scheduled to arrive in April/May). The original bid total was \$11,730,000, and the town received 11 bids, which, according to Ms. Moller, was the largest number of bidders in any borrowing. The lowest true interest cost (TIC) came in at 3.57%, with a premium of \$722,091.25. He said this premium would reduce the borrowing to \$11,135,000 after the underwriter's fees and issuance costs. Raymond James and Associates was the low bidder. Mr. Haddad said it was great news for the town's Water Rate Payers and Taxpayers and a testament to the strength of its AAA Bond Rating. The Town also received bids for Bond Anticipation Notes (BAN) in the amount of \$1,575,584 as follows: \$1,405,374 for the Middle School Track, \$83,416 for Police Radios, and \$86,794 for Whitney Well Improvements. Mr. Haddad said this BAN was awarded to Fidelity Capital Markets for their bid of 3.4368% net interest cost (NIC), with a premium of \$12,746.48, which would cover the underwriter's fees and issuance costs. Mr. Haddad said this was great news for the taxpayers and water ratepayers.

Ms. Pine explained that the term "premium" means the lender is paying the town for the privilege of lending it money. Ms. Moller said that, in this instance, they are reducing the amount of funds they are borrowing. Ms. Pine said it was good news for the Taxpayers.

Ms. Manugian made a motion to approve and sign the Bonds for the Water Debt and BAN for various projects, as stated in the packet. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Consider Ratifying the Town Manager’s Appointment of Erin Trainor as Council on Aging Departmental Assistant.

Ms. Pine made a motion to ratify the Town Manager’s appointment of Erin Trainor as Council on Aging Departmental Assistant effective immediately. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Review First Draft of the 2024 Spring Town Meeting Warrant

This item will be discussed/reviewed after the Legislative Workshop.

4. FY 2025 Budget Update

This item will be discussed after the Legislative Workshop.

5. Update on Select Board Meeting Schedule Through the End of the Year

Monday, February 19, 2024	No Meeting- Presidents Day
Monday, February 26, 2024	Public Hearing on the Warrant- to be 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 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	2024 Annual Town Election

ITEMS FOR SELECT BOARD CONSIDERATION AND ACTION

1. Consider Amending Committee Vacancy Policy to Limit the Time a Committee Interest Form will be kept on file for Consideration to Six (6) Months.

Mr. Haddad said during the last Select Board meeting that he proposed amending the Committee Vacancy Appointment Policy. The proposed amendment suggested that the town only keep Committee Interest Forms for up to six months. Mr. Haddad requested the Board consider approving the revised Policy.

Ms. Pine made a motion to approve the Policy as printed in the packet. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

Pursuant to the Charter, Authorize the Town Manager and One Member of the Select Board to Sign Warrants for the Next 30 Days.

Ms. Manugian made a motion to authorize the Town Manager and the Select Board Chair to sign Warrants for the next 30 days. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

ON-GOING ISSUES

C. Florence Roche Elementary School- Mr. Haddad said the Department Heads and Select Board members had a great tour of the new Florence Roche Elementary School building on February 6th. He praised the outstanding progress of the project, which is on schedule and under budget. This is a testament to the hard work of the Owner's Project Manager (OPM) from Left Field, the architects from Studio G, and the Gilbane Building Company. Ms. Pine wanted to add that the school is gorgeous and well-planned.

Mr. Robertson called the Finance Committee to order at 6:10 PM.

Finance Committee: Vote on FY25 Regional School District Assessments

Mr. Mike Sulprizio, Ms. Mary Linskey, Mr. Gary Green, and Mr. Bud Robertson from the Finance Committee were present.

Mr. Haddad said the Groton Dunstable Regional School Committee voted on their Assessment at their last meeting.

Mr. Robertson entertained a motion to approve the Groton Dunstable Regional School District assessment, in the amount of \$29,482,865, and the Nashoba Valley Technical Regional High School's assessment, in the amount of \$966,719. The total assessment amounts to \$30,449,584.

Mr. Green made a motion to approve the assessment for the Groton Dunstable Regional School District (GDRSD), in the amount of \$29,482,865, and the Nashoba Valley Technical Regional High School's assessment, in the amount of \$966,719. The total assessment amounts to \$30,449,584. Ms. Linskey seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Mr. Haddad clarified that the GDRSD has come in with a lower Capital Assessment of \$275,000. As a result, less money will be taken out of the Capital Stabilization Fund at the Town Meeting. The Operational and Debt Assessments will remain the same as previously planned. Mr. Robertson confirmed that the Finance Committee had already approved the Municipal Assessment. He also mentioned that the total Town budget, including the Assessments is \$52,772,412.

The motion carried unanimously.

6:15 P.M. In Joint Session with the Finance Committee, Groton Dunstable Regional School District Committee, Dunstable Board of Selectmen, and Advisory Board- Legislative Update with Senator John Cronin, Senator Edward Kennedy, Representative Margaret Scarsdale, and Representative Sena.

The Groton Select Board requested a Legislative Workshop with the Dunstable Board of Selectmen and the Groton Select Board. Mr. Haddad also invited the Groton Dunstable Regional School District Committee, the Groton Finance Committee, the Dunstable Advisory Board, Superintendent Chesson, and Dunstable Town

Administrator Silva. Senators Cronin and Kennedy, along with Representatives Scarsdale and Sena, were in attendance for the Workshop. The Workshop aimed to discuss the difficult year the Towns of Groton and Dunstable and the Groton Dunstable Regional School District are facing in Fiscal year 2025.

Mr. Haddad thanked the state delegates for attending the meeting that evening. He mentioned that he had provided them with topics they wanted to discuss to make the meeting more efficient. Mr. Cunningham mentioned they were seeking to gain perspective on the budget process and what that looks like. Senator Cronin started by expressing his appreciation for the forum and stated that Groton has an exceptional Town Manager, Mr. Haddad.

Senator Cronin has said that the budget environment was exceptionally challenging, and to explain the budget process, the Governor will submit her budget in January, followed by the House budget in April. The Senate will then create its budget in mid to late May, after which the House and Senate conferees will reconcile their versions of the budget by sometime in June.

Senator Cronin said that for Fiscal Year 24, they projected a 1.6 percent fiscal growth; they are experiencing a 1.2 percent fiscal growth. He said the budget is a billion dollars under benchmark in terms of total tax collections. He said they are in a fluid process, but the consensus revenue number for FY25's budget will depend on the economy over the next few months. However, he believes there are reasons to be optimistic. In hindsight, he mentioned that the Commonwealth received approximately \$115 billion in federal relief through the Cares Act and ARPA, etc. Those funds have stopped, and the State aims to return to sustainable growth measures. Senator Cronin emphasized that Groton is not alone in facing these challenges and that surrounding towns are dealing with similar issues.

Representative Scarsdale said she wants to think of these conversations as being in this together, and the delegation is there to listen, hear issues, and be a strong partner. She thanked everyone for including them. Representative Sena mirrored Representative Scarsdale by saying thank you, and they are there to support and work with the towns during these times, and it is the time to discuss these critical matters.

Mr. Haddad said the Towns and the School District appreciate earmarks, grants, and other funds the Legislative Delegation has secured for various projects. He hoped the delegation could help move along the conversation with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) regarding funding for the PFAS-related issue. Senator Cronin informed that he had a positive discussion with DEP's Regional Administrator, Mary Jude Pigsley, who expects to provide some news on the matter within 30 days. Mr. Haddad stated that any funding for the PFAS project would be greatly appreciated. Dunstable Town Administrator Jason Silva said Mary Jude Pigsley has been a huge asset and resource to both Dunstable and Groton.

Mr. Haddad wanted to raise the topic of Chapter 90 funds, as there has been an uptick in funds from the Millionaire's tax collection. Mr. Haddad mentioned they had spoken to their representatives at MassDOT, but there was no guarantee that these funds would continue. He asked if there was any update on the matter. Groton has received an additional \$300,000 to address roads and paving. Senator Cronin stated that there is currently no reliable data available regarding the Millionaire's tax collection or fair share money for the upcoming years. He said it is a priority to ensure that the transportation share of those funds is delivered back to municipalities. Mr. Silva stated that Dunstable received \$115,000 in funds from the Millionaire's tax collection.

A quorum of the School Committee was present, and Ms. Raynor called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Ms. Manugian wanted to discuss climate change-driven needs with the delegation. Mr. Haddad said Groton had received a regional grant working with the cities of Fitchburg and Leominster and the towns of Ashburnham and

Pepperell. He said they were in the process of planning and implementing the program. Mr. Haddad asked if the MVP program is going to be fully funded. Senator Cronin expects that to be a continued priority as it is a popular program in cities and towns. Ms. Pine said she heard that due to the money infrastructure, funds would be allocated to address climate change-related problems. She specifically mentioned the flooding on Broadmeadow Road in Groton and inquired about possibly receiving funds for that project. Representative Scarsdale responded by stating that the Governor is very committed to addressing climate change and believes it will continue to be a priority for the state.

Ms. Manugian said she understood that obtaining additional state funding was unlikely and that Groton needed more local funding. She inquired if there had been any discussion about reducing the implementation of newly mandated programs that the state requires towns to pay for. Ms. Manugian then asked for suggestions on how to have conversations with constituents and educate them about the local level not seeing funding for K- 12 grade. Senator Cronin said the state delegation is willing to help have these conversations, and if there are any areas they can help ease the burden, they are available to do so. Representative Sena said he believes there are gaps in the system, and they need to advocate for available grants. Dr. Chesson, GDRSD Superintendent, said she receives updates regularly regarding funding. She said if the schools are mandated early literacy programs, it could cost the district approximately \$500,000 and said it was unacceptable. Representative Sena said there is a redraft of the bill on early literacy, and hopefully, it will be supported. He said there needs to be a reform throughout the whole state. Dr. Chesson said she would like to have the opportunity to show data that it is working within the district.

Mr. Gary Green, a member of the Groton Finance Committee, suggested that the State Legislature give more power to the towns and regional school districts to control their expenses. This would allow them to avoid limiting the growth of revenue.

Representative Scarsdale said that as a former Select Board Chair of Pepperell, she knows firsthand how unfunded mandates, especially those affecting regional schools, can strangle towns and hurt small-town budgets. She believed it's important to examine these issues closely.

Mr. Cunningham said in Groton that three non-profit institutions are an important part of our community, but their exemptions from local property taxes are problematic. In Groton's case, as an example, the non-profit institutions provide housing and use local services and the school system without any contribution. Mr. Cunningham explained that a proposal before the Legislature would allow cities and towns to tax real estate holdings of non-profits holding over \$15 million in property valuation to be taxed for 25% of their assessed value. He said this would be helpful to Groton's budget. Representative Scarsdale asked if it was an opt-in. Mr. Haddad confirmed it was, and the town would have to go to a Town Meeting to opt into that law. He said this would allow municipalities to sign agreements with their non-profits to adjust that number. Mr. Haddad said Groton was looking at a \$5.5M override over the next three years, \$2.1M in Dunstable, and the Board is frequently asked why the local non-profits don't contribute more. Mr. Haddad works closely with the non-profits, and having legislation in place would be very helpful. Mr. Pisani mentioned that residents often contact him regarding the local Non-profit Schools. He appreciates the PILOTS that they give to the town. He believes that implementing the proposed legislation would have a lot of support and that the delegation's assistance is needed to achieve it. Mr. Pisani said that the proposed 25% tax on their assessed value would greatly help, and one non-profit has the potential to solve a lot of the town's issues. Senator Kennedy asked about the fiscal impact of the schools; Mr. Pisani stated that Lawrence Academy's assessed value was approximately \$50 million, and Groton School was roughly \$270 million. It is a significant amount of money that could benefit the town.

Mr. Jake Lewon, Dunstable Advisory Board member, said if the override doesn't pass in Dunstable, they are at the point of devastation of the Community. Mr. Haddad asked about possibly amending Proposition 2½ to

address inflation, a solution that would solve problems locally. He said any help would be greatly appreciated. Mr. Silva said there was a Commonwealth Magazine Article about the Newton Teacher strike, and it was about wanting to take care of employees, but the funding mechanism is broken, and there is no way out of it. He stated that Dunstable went for an Override last year and failed. He said cuts have been made, and they have been very creative and looking at all options; they are doing all they can. The way they are funding municipalities is not working. Mr. Silva said they were asking the delegation for help.

Dunstable Selectmen Member Mr. Kieran Meehan asked the delegation what could be done locally to get positive attention and relief. Senator Cronin suggested fostering commercial and economic growth. Small towns have an issue with their commercial zoning. Ms. Pine said that in Groton, there are a number of vacant, fully zoned commercial properties available, but nobody is buying them.

Mr. Haddad stated that six of the eight Nashoba Valley Tech communities are seeking Overrides. Ms. Pine emphasized the importance of understanding this information to explain to others that it is not a result of bad management.

Senator Kennedy stated that the state government will have a better understanding of how they will manage their budget by the end of March. He mentioned that smaller communities are struggling with Overrides of Proposition 2½ and would like the Ways and Means Committee to consider their challenges and come up with a solution. He also mentioned that the legislature currently has three bond bills, including an economic development bill, which could possibly help the towns of Groton or Dunstable. He suggested that increasing commercial development along Route 113 in Dunstable could be helpful.

Mr. Haddad said he couldn't thank the Representatives enough for attending that evening and looks forward to continuing working with them. Senator Kennedy suggested reconvening in the later part of March. Mr. Haddad thanked Dunstable and the School District for attending.

TOWN MANAGERS REPORT- CONTINUED

3. Review First Draft of the 2024 Spring Town Meeting Warrant

Mr. Haddad provided the Board with the first draft of the 2024 Spring Town Meeting Warrant. He requested a few minutes to review the Warrant with the Board and informed them that it closed on February 9th at the end of business day. There are 27 articles, with one being a placeholder. A public hearing is scheduled on February 26th at the Groton Center, starting at 7:00 P.M., to discuss the Warrant. The articles are as follows:

Articles 1-4 will be presented as one Consent Motion.

Article 1: Hear Reports

Article 2: Elected Officials Compensation

Article 3: Wage and Classification Schedule

Article 4: Appropriate FY 2025 Contribution to the OPEB Trust Fund

Article 5: Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Operating Budget

Article 6: Fiscal Year 2025 Capital Budget

Article 7: Revoke Cable Enterprise Fund in Fiscal Year 2025- Mr. Haddad said they will eliminate it in FY25 and create a receipts reserve for the appropriation fund.

Article 8: PEG Access and Cable Realter Fund Acceptance

Article 9: Funding for Destination Groton Committee

Article 10: Funding for Sustainability Commission

Article 11: Community Preservation Funding Accounts

Article 12: Community Preservation Funding Recommendations

Article 13: TIFF-Mr. Haddad explained that this was a placeholder and that he would have more information regarding this at the public hearing.

Article 14: Extend Sewer District- looking to see if the Town will vote to extend the “Groton Center Sewer District” to add another property on Fairview Drive off.

Article 15: Extend Four Corners Sewer District- Mr. Haddad said this is a proposal for affordable housing at 797 Boston Road. The Sewer Commission added the article.

Article 16: Citizen’s Petition- Return to Voice Vote or Voter Card Count at Town Meeting- This article proposes eliminating electronic voting and returning to voter card count at Town Meeting.

Article 17: Citizen’s Petition- Set Statutory Speed Limit at 25 MPH- Ms. Manugian asked if there was an opinion of the Police Chief. Mr. Haddad said the Police Chief would support this. Mr. Haddad said roads with statutory speed limits are unaffected by this. Ms. Manugian requested a map showing roads impacted by 25 mph.

Articles 18 through 27: Mr. Haddad said these articles will be presented as one motion.

Article 18: Transfer Within the Water Enterprise Fund.

Article 19: Transfer Within the Sewer Enterprise Fund

Article 20: Transfer Within Cable Enterprise Fund- Mr. Haddad said there is still a Cable Enterprise Fund until June 30.

Article 21: Transfer within Cable Enterprise Fund

Article 22: Prior Year Bills

Article 23: Current Year Line-Item Transfers

Article 24: Appropriate Funding to Offset Snow and Ice Deficit

Article 25: Debt Service for the Middle School Track- Fiscal Year 2024

Article 26: Debt Service for the Middle School Track- Fiscal Year 2025

Article 27: Establishing Limits for Various Revolving Funds

4. **FY 2025 Budget Update**

Mr. Haddad said that regarding the FY 2025 Budget Update, he was pleased to report that the Finance Committee voted unanimously to recommend the FY 2025 Level Service Budget to the Town Meeting as submitted by the Town Manager. He explained that the Finance Committee decided to submit the budget to Town Meeting, with the motion contingent upon an Override of Proposition 2½. He stated that the Finance Committee would not bring forward a contingent budget if the override should fail. Mr. Haddad believes it is a good decision and is very pleased. If the override fails, they will have to go back to another Town Meeting and reconvene. Mr. Haddad wants the Select Board to be aware of their position going into Town Meeting. Ms. Manugian also supports this decision and believes it will put them in a much stronger position going into the Town Meeting. Mr. Haddad said the budget will not be voted by consent; it will be voted on section by section. Ms. Pine agreed that it was the right way to proceed.

Approval of Minutes from February 5, 2024

Ms. Pine made a motion to approve the minutes of the regularly scheduled meeting from February 5, 2024, with a few minor amendments. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

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