

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
HYBRID MEETING  
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2024  
APPROVED**

**SB Members Present:** Matt Pisani; John Reilly; Peter Cunningham, Clerk; Alison Manugian, Chair;

**SB Members Virtually Present:** Becky Pine, Vice Chair;

**Finance Committee Members Present:** Bud Robertson, Chair; Mary Linskey; David Manugian; Mike Whitefield; Kristina Lengyel

**Also Present:** Mark Haddad, Town Manager; Kara Cruikshank, Executive Assistant to the Town Manager; Hannah Moller, Treasurer/Tax Collector; Patricia DuFresne, Assistant Director of Finance/Town Accountant; Melisa Doig, Human Resource Director; Fire Chief Arthur Cheeks; Tom Delaney, DPW Director; Brian Callahan, DPW Director in Training; Dawn Dunbar, Town Clerk; Megan Foster, Principal Assessor; Mike Hartnett, Assistant Tax Collector; Hannah Moller, Tax/Treasurer Collector; Takashi Tada, Land Use Director/Town Planner; Tom Orcutt, Groton Water Superintendent; Charlotte Steeves, Conservation Administrator; Michelle Collette.

Ms. Manugian called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chair Bud Robertson called the Finance Committee called the meeting to order.

Michelle Collette announced that the Nashoba Associated Boards of Health will hold their Annual Flu Clinics beginning September 24, 2024. The Groton Center will hold its clinic on Thursday, September 26th, from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. Mr. Cunningham asked for an update regarding EEE and the West Nile Virus. Ms. Collette stated that the advisory was to wear repellent and long sleeves and to avoid going outdoors after dark.

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD #1**

None

**TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

**1. Authorize the Town Manager to Sign the Affordable Housing Grant Agreement.**

Mr. Haddad explained that the Affordable Housing Trust approved the CPA Affordable House Grant Agreement and authorized its Chair, Ms. Pine, to sign it on behalf of the trust. The agreement is similar to the grant agreement executed a year or so ago for the \$200k grant. The Trust has requested that the Select Board authorize the Town Manager to sign the Agreement on behalf of the Board. Once approved, the agreement will go to the Community Preservation Committee for their review and "acknowledgment" of the agreement.

*Mr. Cunningham motioned to authorize the Town Manager to Sign the Affordable Housing Grant Agreement. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. Roll call: Cunningham-aye; Pine-aye; Reilly-aye; Pisani-aye; Manugian-aye.*

**2. Update on Fiscal Year 2025 Budget.**

Mr. Haddad provided an update on the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget during his Town Manager’s Report. He said the Town Manager’s and Town Administrator’s Tri-Comm Working Group held their first meeting to outline the FY 2026 Budget Process. They will meet again after the School Committee receives information on attempting to change the Regional Agreement. Once the School Committee provides guidance to the School Superintendent, they will meet to discuss the impact on the Towns of Groton and Dunstable. On September 30th, Mr. Haddad would like to meet in a joint session with the Finance Committee to discuss Collective Bargaining in an Executive Session. He explained that six union agreements are up this year, which will have a major impact on the FY 2026 Budget. He would coordinate with Finance Committee Chair Mr. Robertson and Select Board Chair Manugian to schedule the meeting.

**3. Proposed Select Board Meeting Schedule through the End of the Year.**

Monday, September 16, 2024	Finalize the 2024 Fall Town Meeting Warrant
Monday, September 23, 2024	No Meeting
Monday, September 30, 2024	Executive Session Collective Bargaining Guidance Interview Applicant- Charter Review Committee
Saturday, October 5, 2024	2024 Fall Town Meeting
Monday, October 7, 2024	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, October 14, 2024	No Meeting (Indigenous People’s Day)
Monday, October 21, 2024	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, October 28, 2024	In Joint Session with the Finance Committee-Provide FY 2026 Budget Guidance
Monday, November 4, 2024	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, November 11, 2024	No Meeting (Veteran’s Day)
Monday, November 18, 2024	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, November 25, 2024	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, December 2, 2024	No Meeting
Monday, December 9, 2024	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, December 16, 2024	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, December 23, 2024	No Meeting
Monday, December 30, 2024	No Meeting
Monday, January 6, 2024	Regularly Scheduled Meeting

**ITEMS FOR SELECT BOARD CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL**

**1. Authorize Gift Fund for the Invasive Species Committee.**

*Mr. Reilly motioned to accept the gift and authorize a Gift Fund for the Invasive Species Committee. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. Roll call: Cunningham-aye; Pine-aye; Reilly-aye; Pisani-aye; Manugian-aye.*

**2. Consider Approving a One-Day Wine and Malt Beverage License for the Friends of Prescott for Open Mic Night on Friday, September 13, 2024, from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.**

*Mr. Pisani made a motion to approve a One-Day Wine and Malt Beverages License for the Friends of Prescott for Open Mic Night to be held on Friday, September 13, 2024, from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. Roll Call: Cunningham-aye; Pine-aye; Reilly-aye; Pisani-aye; Manugian-aye.*

**6:15 p.m. In Joint Session with the Finance Committee- Public Hearing on the 2024 Fall Town Meeting Warrant.**

Mr. Haddad read the Public Hearing notice into the record.

Mr. Haddad asked the Board to open the public hearing.

*Mr. Cunningham made a motion to open the public hearing for the 2024 Fall Town Meeting Warrant. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. Roll call: Cunningham-aye; Pine-aye; Reilly-aye; Pisani-aye; Manugian-aye.*

*Mr. Manugian moved to open the public hearing for the Finance Committee. Ms. Linskey seconded the motion. Roll Call: Robertson-aye; Linskey-aye; Manugian-aye; Whitefield-aye; Lengyel-aye.*

Articles 1-10, with the exception of Article 2, will be presented as one Consent Motion.

**Article 1: Prior Year Bills-** There are no unpaid bills at this time.

**Article 2: Amend the Fiscal Year 2025 Town Operating Budget-**

Mr. Haddad provided the information and recommendations for the various Articles requesting funding in the 2024 Fall Town Meeting Warrant. He said this is the earliest that Free Cash has been certified. He congratulated Ms. DuFresne on her hard work in getting the cash balance sheet to the state to get the free cash certified earlier than usual due to the Town Meeting being earlier. The memorandum listed the balances in the Town’s various Reserve Accounts. He read them off as follows:

Stabilization Fund:	\$2,649,708
Capital Stabilization Fund:	\$ 90,394
GDRSD Capital Stabilization Fund:	\$ 21,996
Unexpended Tax Fund:	\$ 62,811
Certified Free Cash:	\$ 2,757,118

**6:20 p.m. Public Hearing- Road Layout Hearing- Monarch Path**

Mr. Haddad read the Public Hearing notice into the record.

Mr. Haddad asked the Board to open the public hearing.

*Mr. Reilly made a motion to open the public hearing for Monarch Path. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. Roll Call: Cunningham-aye; Pine-aye; Reilly-aye; Pisani-aye; Manugian-aye.*

Mr. Haddad asked the Board to suspend the 2024 Fall Town Meeting Warrant public hearing.

*Mr. Reilly motioned to suspend the warrant's public hearing until after the Road Layout hearing for Monarch Path. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. Roll Call: Cunningham-aye; Pine-aye; Reilly-aye; Pisani-aye; Manugian-aye.*

**Article 24: Accept Monarch Path as a Town Way—**

DPW Director Mr. Delaney, Town Planner Mr. Tada, and a representative from the Developer of Monarch Path attended the public hearing. Mr. Tada and Mr. Delaney provided memos to the Select Board regarding the Road Acceptance for Monarch Path. Mr. Haddad stated that the main issue that still needs to be addressed are the manhole covers that were covered when they paved the road. The manhole covers need to be exposed and reinspected by the Planning Board's engineer and the DPW. Mr. Delaney confirmed that the work was in process. The Planning Board has not made a recommendation to the Select Board because they need to receive the sign-off on the roadway first. The Select Board must decide to accept the layout at least seven days before the Town Meeting. Mr. Tada said they need to receive the final as-built plan from the engineer and conduct a site visit before listing this on the Planning Board's agenda. The Planning Board will meet on September 26th via Zoom, and Mr. Haddad suggested the Select Board continue the public hearing to that evening.

*Ms. Pine motioned to continue the Road Acceptance public hearing for Monarch Path to Thursday, September 26, at 7:15 p.m. via Zoom. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. Roll Call: Cunningham-aye; Pine-aye; Reilly-aye; Pisani-aye; Manugian-aye.*

Mr. Haddad entertained a motion to reopen the public hearing on the 2024 Fall Town Meeting Warrant.

*Mr. Cunningham motioned to reopen the public hearing on the 2024 Fall Town Meeting Warrant. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. Roll Call: Cunningham-aye; Pine-aye; Reilly-aye; Pisani-aye; Manugian-aye.*

**Continued discussion on Article 2:**

Mr. Haddad said that he recommended several budget transfers:

1. Select Board Expenses: As owners and Landlords of the Prescott School, The Town is responsible for any major capital expenditure/repairs. The front entrance doors are in disrepair and need to be replaced. The cost to replace the doors is estimated to be \$28,500. This one-time expense will come from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash).
2. Town Manager Expenses: Mr. Haddad has been working with the Trails Committee and Park Commission to upgrade the Storage Shed at Town Field. The shed does not have electricity, and it will cost \$8,100 to bring electricity to it. This one-time expense will come from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash).
3. Town Counsel Expenses: The Town is facing three Arbitration Cases with the Police Union, which are very expensive to defend. The Legal budget will need an additional \$40,000 for

this purpose. This one-time request of \$40,000 will come from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash).

4. Insurance and Bonding: Due to a number of natural events (lightning strikes, etc.), the Town has seen an 18% increase in Liability Insurance for Fiscal Year 2025; there is currently an anticipated shortfall of \$20,000 in this Account. This funding will be a recurring cost from the Unexpended Tax Capacity.
5. Police Expenses: Two of three police department vacancies have been filled with new recruits. The cost to the Town for sending these recruits to the Academy is \$3,200 each, for a total of \$6,400. This funding will be a one-time expense from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash).
6. Fire Wages: Fire Chief Cheeks unexpectedly left for an emergency before this discussion. Mr. Haddad said the closing of the Nashoba Valley Medical Center (NVMCC) has had an adverse impact on the Fire Department, creating a severe situation for emergency medical response by the department. To address this, the Fire Chief has requested funding for two additional Firefighters/EMTs for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2025. This short-term solution would allow the Department to guarantee staffing for a second ambulance, which is desperately needed. The increase to the budget would be an additional \$171,182 as follows:

Wages:	\$139,411
Gear and Clothing:	\$ 7,425
Health Insurance:	\$ 24,346

Mr. Haddad said that as the town is unsure of the final expense, he recommends that the initial funding come from Excess and Deficiency (Free Cash). Chief Cheeks will attend the Finance Committee meeting on Tuesday, September 10<sup>th</sup> to discuss this proposal in more detail.

7. Fire Expenses: Please see Explanation #6 above.
8. Council on Aging Expenses: The Council on Aging Director has requested the mailing for a bi-monthly newsletter as well as a twice-per-year mailing to all registered voters in Groton. The cost is approximately \$7,500. This funding will be a recurring cost; therefore, it will come from the unexpended tax Capacity.
9. Weed Management—Groton Lakes- In 2012, the Town appropriated approximately \$410,000 to fund a major herbicide treatment of Lost Lake/Knops Pond to eradicate invasive weeds. In 2019, the Lakes required another major treatment, and this funding came from the Community Preservation Fund. Solitude Lake Management, the firm the Groton Lakes Association (GLA) utilizes to treat the Lakes, has determined that a major treatment is required in May 2025. The estimated cost for the treatment is \$123,500. To help offset the total cost, the GLA will privately raise \$35,000 towards the cost. The Town

would then need to appropriate \$88,500 for the Treatment. Since this is a one-time expense, the requested \$88,500 would come from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash). Ms. Manugian inquired about the plan moving forward. Mr. Haddad mentioned that \$12,800 has been allocated in the operating budget for spot treatment, which should be enough to cover future treatments.

10. Debt Service: Mr. Haddad said that based on the final borrowing terms on FY 2025 Bond issues, the total Debt Service Budget will be reduced by \$125,159. The primary reduction, and good news for Groton Taxpayers, is the interest rate on the Bond Anticipated Noted for the remaining Florence Roche Elementary School Construction Project, which is under the original estimate, saving the taxpayers \$255,614 in the Fiscal year 2025. He said the Debt Budget would be adjusted to reflect borrowing for the Fire Department Ambulance, approved at the 2023 Spring Town Meeting, and paying down the debt on the Highway Dump truck, approved at the 2022 Spring Town Meeting. The following is the proposed new Debt Budget for Fiscal Year 2025:

		<u>Original</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
2000	Long Term Debt - Principal Excluded	\$ 2,025,000	\$ 2,025,000
2001	Long Term Debt - Principal Non-Excluded	\$ 165,000	\$ 160,000
2002	Long Term Debt - Interest - Excluded	\$ 1,340,252	\$ 1,340,252
2003	Long Term Debt - Interest - Non-Excluded	\$ 110,364	\$ 106,974
2004	Short Term Debt - Principal - Town - Non Excluded	\$ 123,526	\$ 247,532
2005A	Short Term Debt - Interest - Town - Non Excluded	\$ 8,644	\$ 24,483
2005B	Short Term Debt - Interest - Town - Excluded	\$ 1,283,825	\$ 1,028,211
<b>DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL</b>		<b>\$ 5,056,611</b>	<b>\$ 4,932,452</b>

These issues will be funded as follows:

- Excluded Debt will be Decreased by \$255,614 from \$4,649,077 to \$4,393,463
- Debt within the Tax Levy will be decreased by \$8,390
- To fund the Short Term Principal and Short Term Interest Increases (total of \$139,845), \$104,955 will come from Ambulance receipts and \$34,890 will come from Free Cash.

Mr. Cunningham asked about ambulance receipts. Mr. Haddad mentioned that they generate about \$40,000 per month in ambulance receipts and allocate around \$350,000 to offset the Fire Department’s Budget, specifically for EMS.

11. Health Insurance: See Explanation #6 above. The requested amount is: \$24,346

**Article 3: Transfer Money into Capital Stabilization Fund—**

Mr. Haddad stated that the current balance in this fund is \$90,394. If all recommended transfers and appropriations are approved under Article 2 of this Warrant, the total Fiscal year Operating Budget will be \$51,313,320. Mr. Haddad would like to transfer \$900,000 from Free Cash. The Town's Financial Policies require a balance in this Fund of 1.5% of the Operating Budget, which would amount to a

Capital Stabilization Fund Balance of \$769,699. The anticipated Fiscal year 2026 Capital Budget is \$898,991. Mr. Haddad is recommending a transfer of \$900,000 from Free Cash to add to this Fund.

**Article 4: Transfer Money into the Stabilization Fund-**

This Article is being left on the Warrant in the event of a market adjustment that would reduce the current fund to below the requisite 5%.

**Article 5: Transfer money into the GDRSD Capital Stabilization Fund-**

This Article is a placeholder if the Town receives the anticipated Fiscal year 2026 Capital Plan of the Groton Dunstable Regional School District before the 2024 Fall Town Meeting.

**Article 6: Revoke Opioid Settlements Special Purpose Stabilization Fund—**

The Town of Groton has been eligible to receive settlement payments from various opioid makers for the prevention, harm reduction, treatment and recovery of individuals harmed by the use of opioids. Opioid settlement funds currently on deposit as well as all future settlement funds received will be deposited into the Special Revenue Fund. Groton is expecting to receive approximately \$40,000 through 2038. At the time of the initial settlement payments, the State had all Town's create a Special Purpose Stabilization Fund to receive and disburse funds. They have since simplified the process to allow Municipalities to create a Special Revenue Fund instead that will allow communities better access to the Funds for purposes identified in the settlement agreements. As the Special Purpose Stabilization Fund is no longer needed, this Article seeks to revoke its creation.

**Article 7: Transfer Within the Water Enterprise Fund-**

This Article is to transfer \$60,000 from the Water Enterprise Fund Surplus to pay for the Fiscal year 2025 Water Department's General Expense to purchase a new pick-up truck.

**Article 8: Transfer Within the Center Sewer Enterprise Fund-** This is a placeholder but most likely to be withdrawn

**Article 9: Transfer Within the Four Corners Sewer Enterprise-** This is a placeholder.

**Article 10: Debt Service for the Middle School Track—Fiscal Year 2025—**

The middle school track received two appropriations. The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) has paid off one million dollars and is currently paying the remaining \$1.4 million in debt service. The CPC would like to pay this off as soon as possible and would like to increase the principal paydown in FY 2025 by \$100,000 to \$335,072.

**Article 11: Water Supply System for Heritage Landing—**

Groton Water Superintendent Mr. Orcutt stated that the town has applied for a Mass Works grant. The water supply system for Heritage Landing would depend on receiving the grant, which is requested in the amount of \$2,509,600.

**Article 12: Funding for Security Improvements at Sargisson Beach—**

The Conservation Administrator, Ms. Charlotte Steeves, and the DPW Director in Training, Mr. Brian Callahan, worked with the IT Department regarding installing security cameras at Sargission Beach. The beach is facing a trash dumping problem. Mr. Haddad believes installing good security would help solve this issue and considers the money well-spent to protect the town's assets. The Town will request \$40,000 from the Excess and Deficiency (Free Cash) Fund. Ms. Manugian asked at what point the town would shut down the beach. Ms. Steeves said that shutting down the beach would have been the best option, but it should have happened sooner. The Sargission Beach Committee should put this on its agenda to address if the illegal dumping continues. Mr. Reilly said he had suggested the Committee charge a fee for years but didn't think they could regulate the parking. Finance Committee member Kristina Lengyel asked where the security feed would go. Mr. Haddad said that it goes to the Police Department. Ms. Pine said she was opposed to closing the beach.

**Article 13: Funding to Purchase Budget Software for the Town of Groton—**

Mr. Haddad uses Excel to prepare the budget and has suggested that the Town should consider planning for budgeting software for when the Town Manager retires. He expects that the conversion process will take a few years. Although it would likely be an annual expenditure, he believes it is a worthwhile investment. The Town will request \$35,000 to fund the software, with the funding coming from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash). Mr. Haddad mentioned they have been in contact with ClearGov, and the estimated cost for implementing the software would be around \$8,900. For an entire year, the cost would be \$30,000. ClearGov has offered a discounted price of \$22,000 for 3/4 of a year. Therefore, the total cost for Fiscal Year 2026 would be \$31,000. Mr. Haddad will discuss with the Finance Committee how this would be funded. Ms. Pine inquired about the number of other towns in MA using ClearGov. Mr. Haddad said approximately 32 municipalities are using it. Ms. Pine asked Mr. Haddad to conduct further research on the software used in comparable towns.

**Article 14: Engineering Funds for Complete Streets Grant Work—**

Complete Streets has received over \$750,000 in grant funding from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts under its Complete Streets Program. It is seeking grant applications for two potential projects this fall. Mr. Takashi Tada said they will not be able to apply in the fall application round as Complete Streets is still in the process of completing the sidewalk projects on West Main Street and Lowell Road. The Committee requests \$35,000 to cover the engineering costs for projects they will be proposing next Spring. This funding would come from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash).

**Article 15: Amend Purpose of CPA Project for Improvements to Baseball Diamond—**

The 2023 Spring Town Meeting appropriated \$80,000 for improvements to the major league diamond at Town Field. This funding is not enough to design and construct the improvements. This Article is to see if the Town will vote to amend the purpose of the CPC Proposal to allow for a comprehensive study and development of bid specifications for improvements to Town Field. Mr. Haddad said he had met with the Community Preservation Committee, and they were in favor of this project. He believes Town Field should be a showpiece in Groton. The Town Manager intends to submit a formal project to the CPC for Fiscal Year 2026.

Mr. Haddad explained that if the Select Board and Finance Committee approve all the proposed Free Cash transfers, the Town will require \$1,387,572, leaving an anticipated Free Cash balance of

\$1,369,546. In Spring 2025, the Town will need approximately \$300,000 in Free Cash to cover Debt Service, OPEB Trust Funds, and Department Head Performance Incentives, leaving a balance of \$1,069,546.

**Article 16: Squannacook River Dam—**

Mr. Haddad reported that the DPW conducted a feasibility study to determine whether removing or repairing the Squannacook River Dam was best. During a recent Select Board meeting, the study of the Squannacook River Dam was discussed. The Board decided they needed input from the Town Meeting to help them make a decision. Mr. Haddad clarified during the meeting that it might be too early to bring the matter to the Town Meeting. He explained that the Board required more information before making a decision. Mr. Haddad then asked the DPW Director in Training, Brian Callahan, and Conservation Administrator Charlotte Steeves to compile a list of the pros and cons of potentially removing or repairing the Squannacook River Dam (please see attached memo). The memo explains an issue of ownership that needs to be resolved. This is currently under review by the Town Counsel. Mr. Haddad said the estimated cost to repair the dam is \$800,000, and it is his understanding that there are no state grants out there to help fund it.

Mr. Haddad explained that it might be premature to bring this article forward at this time. He wanted to clarify that it is an advisory article and that the ultimate decision to remove the dam rests with the Select Board. Mr. Haddad said this article has been discussed and that there is a lot of information out there. Regardless of ownership, the Town of Groton will cover the cost of the dam repair due to an agreement that was signed when River Court purchased the property. The Town promised to protect River Court by maintaining the Dam. You can't just maintain half a dam. Mr. Cunningham said getting more information from Town Counsel is important. Ms. Manugian inquired about changing the article summary to "recommend the removal of the Squannacook River Dam" for clarity. The preliminary estimate is between \$500,000 and \$1 million. Mr. Delaney said the Board needs to decide which avenue to go to ensure it is safe. He said it could be rebuilt or removed. Ms. Pine believes the article should be removed from the Warrant before the Town Meeting and considers it premature. Mr. Delaney said many questions won't be answered until the next engineering round.

Public Comments

*Ms. Ginger Vollmar agreed with Ms. Pine's statement. Ms. Vollmar stated that it wasn't communicated well that this Article would be on the warrant.*

*Resident Mr. Carl Canner from West Groton asked what the cost of repairing the Shirley side of the dam would be. Mr. Canner thinks more studies are needed to repair the dam and does not favor tearing it down.*

*Resident Ms. Michelle Collette said she loved the dam and that it is part of West Groton's character. She thinks a study of the cost of repairing the dam is a great first step. She would like to place it on the Warrant to find out how to repair the dam. Mr. Cunningham said he would be supportive of adding the Article.*

Mr. Haddad mentioned that during their meeting with the state, they learned that the town must apply for the grant by December, but this application does not commit the town to removing the dam. Mr. Delaney will confirm this information. Mr. Haddad said there is a need for detailed engineering drawings to repair the dam. He mentioned that there is currently no appropriation to cover the cost of a study for dam repairs. He suggested a possible change to the article to appropriate funds for hiring an engineer for the dam repair. Mr. Delaney estimated that this would cost approximately \$139,000. Ms. Pine agreed with the idea of spending money to conduct a study to make an informed decision.

Ms. Manugian suggested revising the Article to appropriate the necessary funds to hire professionals to study both options for repairing and removing the dam. Ms. Pine agrees with Ms. Manugian that they need credible, accurate information.

*Ms. Pine moved to direct the Town Manager to create a new article requesting funds to obtain further information on the cost of repairing the dam and the potential cost of removing it. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion.*

#### Discussion

*Mr. Reilly said his biggest problem with this is the unknown ownership and that Groton doesn't own the whole thing. Mr. Haddad will draft an article and present it to the Board on Monday, September 16, 2024.*

*Roll call: Cunningham-aye; Pine-aye; Reilly-aye; Pisani-aye; Manugian-aye.*

#### **Article 17: Disposition of Town-Owned Land on Hoyts Wharf Road—**

The Affordable Housing Trust initiated this project. Ms. Pine stated that this Article will be removed from the Warrant due to the fact that there are still several unanswered questions, and they are not ready to bring this Article forward.

#### **Article 18: Authorize the Lease of Town-Owned Land—**

This Article is to see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to dispose of a Lease for up to thirty years, a 5.24-acre portion of town-owned land located at 600 Cow Pond Brook Road.

#### **Article 19: Amend Chapter 81, “Town Meetings” of the Code of the Town of Groton**

This Article removes the quorum requirement for any Special Town Meeting and allows the Select Board to set the Annual or Town Election hours.

#### **Article 20: Zoning Amendment—Firearms Retail Sales Establishment-**

Mr. Tada said that the Planning Board provided a memo regarding this Article. He said Ms. Pine brought this up last year, a committee was formed, and they recommended this. (see included memo to these minutes)

#### **Article 21: Zoning Amendment- Solar Parking Canopies-**

Ms. Pine suggested the Country Club parking lot may be a great place to locate one.

**Article 22: Zoning Amendment—Accessory Dwelling Units—**

Mr. Tada explained that this Article will determine whether the Town votes to amend the Bylaw of the Town of Groton. State law will change in February 2025, and the new law will require different wording for accessory dwelling units to comply with the updated state regulations.

**Article 23: Amend Chapter 198 Stormwater Management—Low Impact Development—**

Ms. Collette said the Committee is proposing an amendment to the Stormwater Management By-law to update it so it is consistent with the new Massachusetts Stormwater Handbook and Regulation. Mr. Haddad sent the Board a copy of the redlined copy, and the Town Clerk's office will have a copy.

**Article 24: Accept Monarch Path as a Town Way—** See above.

**Article 25: Citizens’ Petition—Reduce Statutory Speed Limit from 30 MPH to 25 MPH—**

Ms. Manugian requested Mr. Haddad to seek an opinion from Town Counsel regarding the proposed process outlined in the summary.

*Mr. Cunningham motioned to continue the public hearing on Monday, September 16<sup>th</sup>, at 6:15 p.m. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. Roll call: Cunningham-aye; Pine-aye; Reilly-aye; Pisani-aye; Manugian-aye.*

**OTHER BUSINESS**

**ON-GOING ISSUES**

- A. PILOTs-Mr. Haddad reviewed a memo from him to the Board explaining the PILOT Working Group’s progress made by the Town Manager’s Working Group on Studying PILOTs. He explained that an important new category was added for Rules of Exemption. Another spreadsheet was created, breaking down the remaining parcels into various categories. These remaining parcels are the next focus of the Group's review (Please see the attached memo for more details regarding the PILOT review).

**SELECT BOARD LIASON REPORTS**

None

**Public Comment Period #2**

None

**Approval of the Regularly Scheduled Meeting Minutes of August 26, 2024**

*Mr. Cunningham made a motion to approve the minutes of the regularly scheduled meeting of August 26, 2024. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. Roll call: Cunningham-aye; Pine-aye; Reilly-aye; Pisani-aye; Manugian-aye.*

The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 p.m. Respectively submitted by Kara Cruikshank, Executive Assistant to the Town Manager.