

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2025
APPROVED**

Select Board Members Present: Matt Pisani, Chair; Peter Cunningham; Alison Manugian, Clerk; John Reilly;

Select Board Members Absent: Becky Pine, Vice Chair;

Also Present: Mark Haddad, Town Manager; Kara Cruikshank, Executive Assistant to the Town Manager; Melisa Doig, Human Resources Director; Grace Bannasch, Town Clerk; Patricia DuFresne, Assistant Finance Director; Police Chief Luth; Deputy Police Chief Bielecki; Police Officer Andrew Davis, Sergeant Pat Timmins; Members of the Groton Police Department.

Chair Pisani called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and reviewed the agenda.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Haddad explained that last spring, the Town applied for a \$1 million Land and Water Conservation Fund grant for the Cow Pond Brook Fields Project. He described it as a two-step process: first, waiting to hear if the state approves it, then recommending it to the federal government, and finally waiting to hear if the Town received the grant. Mr. Haddad announced that this week, they learned the Town was one of six projects approved in the state. He mentioned that he met with the Parks Commission earlier that evening, and they were very excited about receiving the news. The Parks Commission supports the Out-of-Cycle application by the Town Manager to the Community Preservation Committee for this project and has authorized him to proceed with the two-page project summary for FY27 funding. Mr. Haddad expressed his excitement about this news and thanked Ms. Pine for informing him of the grant announcement. He also thanked both the state and federal governments for their support in providing this grant.

Mr. Cunningham wanted to acknowledge the passing of State Senator Edward Kennedy. He said that Senator Kennedy was a strong advocate for the Town of Groton and made significant contributions to the community. Mr. Cunningham also extended his condolences to the Senator's family.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

None

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Consider Ratifying the Town Manager's Appointment of Andrew Davis as Sergeant for the Groton Police Department.

Mr. Haddad stated that Sergeant Pat Timmins would be retiring from the Groton Police Department. Sergeant Timmins has been an outstanding employee for the Groton Police Department. He began his career as a special officer in 2012, was appointed as a full-time officer in 2015, became a detective in 2018, and was promoted to sergeant in 2022. Throughout his time with the department, Sergeant Timmins has been an exceptional member. Mr. Haddad expressed gratitude to Sergeant Timmins for his service to the Town and wished him all the best in his retirement.

Police Chief Luth and Officer Andrew Davis were present among the members of the Groton Police Department. Mr. Haddad explained that Andrew Davis has been a police officer for the past 14 years, having previously worked for the Boston University Police Department and the Lincoln Police Department. Mr. Davis joined the Groton Police Department in 2018. He added that, after holding various positions throughout his career, he has most recently served as the department's detective for the past three years. Chief Luth also mentioned that Mr. Davis always goes above and beyond for the department. The Chief wanted to acknowledge that Mr. Davis's father is a retired police chief for the Town of Pepperell. Mr. Haddad respectfully requested that the Select Board ratify his appointment of Andrew Davis as a Sergeant on the Groton Police Department to fill the vacancy caused by the retirement of Pat Timmins. Mr. Cunningham responded that it was great news, and they have the utmost confidence in him.

Mr. Reilly made a motion to ratify the Town Manager's appointment of Andrew Davis as Sergeant for the Groton Police Department. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Grace Bannasch, the Town Clerk, was present to swear in Sergeant Davis, while his wife performed the pinning of his badge on his uniform. Mr. Haddad congratulated Sergeant Andrew Davis.

2. Proposed Select Board Meeting Schedule through the End of the Year.

Monday, October 13, 2025	No Meeting (Indigenous Peoples' Day)
Saturday, October 18, 2025	2025 Fall Town Meeting
Monday, October 20, 2025	Regularly Scheduled Meeting (Possibly No Meeting)
Tuesday, October 28, 2025	Regularly Scheduled Meeting (Budget Guidance)
Monday, November 3, 2025	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, November 10, 2025	No Meeting
Monday, November 17, 2025	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, November 24, 2025	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, December 1, 2025	No Meeting
Monday, December 8, 2025	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, December 15, 2025	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, December 22, 2025	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, December 29, 2025	No Meeting
Monday, January 5, 2025	No Meeting
Monday, January 12, 2026	Regularly Scheduled Meeting

ITEMS FOR SELECT BOARD CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL

1. Review Motions and Article Assignments for the 2025 Fall Town Meeting.

Mr. Haddad provided the Board with a copy of the motions for the 2025 Fall Town Meeting, which Town Counsel has approved. He reviewed the motions and article assignments with the Board (see the attached document).

Regarding Article 16: Proposed Amendments to the Groton Charter, the Board decided to switch the order of Motions 1 and 2. Mr. Haddad said he would make this change, which would then be reflected in the Fall Town Meeting Handout.

2. Approve Trail and Recreational Easement granted for the Groton Conservation Commission.

Mr. Haddad enclosed a copy of the Trail and Recreational Easement that Anna Eliot wishes to grant to the Groton Conservation Commission. He explained that during its August 12th meeting, the Conservation Commission approved a Negative Determination of Applicability for Anna Eliot to maintain a strip of land as a mowed meadow in perpetuity. This strip of land is marked as 'Parcel A' on the map included with the proposed Easement. Mr. Haddad said that the strip of land (Parcel A) is approximately 20 feet wide and runs along the property formerly known as 'Shepley Hill' (parcel 225-28). Mr. Eliot intends to gift this strip of land to the Conservation Commission to serve as a public easement and access to Shepley Hill (226-4), which abuts her parcel to the west. Mr. Haddad explained that the Conservation Commission expressed gratitude for the donation, which will enable public access via Longley Road to the Shepley Hill parcel, and requested that the Select Board accept this Gift/Grant.

Ms. Cunningham made a motion to accept the trail and recreational easement granted for the Groton Conservation Commission Gift/Grant from Anna Eliot of parcel 226-4. Mr. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Cunningham explained that there was a question about another easement located on Paquawket Path, and the Conservation Commission was seeking assistance from Town Counsel. Mr. Haddad said that if the Board allowed him, he could send it to Town Counsel to determine its disposition before discussing it with the Board. The Select Board had no objection to this.

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 one member of the Select Board to sign the Warrants for the next 30 days. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Consider Approving a One-Day Wine and Malt Beverage License for the First Parish Church for Liverpool Night to be held on Saturday, October 18th, 2025, from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Ms. Manugian made a motion to approve a One-Day Wine and Malt Beverage License for the First Parish Church for Liverpool Night to be held on Saturday, October 18, 2025, from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

On-Going Issues

- A. PFAS Issue- None
- B. UMass Satellite Emergency Facility –None
- C. Fire Department Staffing – None

D. West Groton Dam-None

SELECT BOARD LIASON REPORTS

Mr. Cunningham reminded everyone that the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) will hold a meeting on Tuesday, October 7th, at 6:00 P.M. at the Groton Center. Representatives from DCR, along with a consulting firm responsible for permitting and engineering the Nashua River Rail Trail, will discuss and present an overview of their plans for reconstructing the trail.

Mr. Haddad announced that they received the state aid report for the first quarter, which includes revenue from meals and hotel taxes. He stated that the meals tax for the first three months of the fiscal year totaled \$71,000, and the hotel tax was \$61,000. He emphasized that these revenues are very important to the Town.

Approval of the Regularly Scheduled Meeting of September 29, 2025

Mr. Cunningham made a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of September 29, 2025. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The Select Board adjourned at 6:22 p.m.

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

**FALL TOWN MEETING
MOTIONS
OCTOBER 18, 2025**

Articles 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, & 11

Mover: John Reilly

CONSENT MOTION

MOTION: I move that the Town take affirmative action on Articles 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 & 11 pursuant to the motions as set forth in the Town Meeting Information Handout for this Meeting, without debate and in accordance with the action proposed under each motion, provided however that if any voter requests the right to debate a specific motion, then said motion shall be debated and voted upon separately.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

Article 1: Prior Year Bills

MOTION: I move that the sum of Eighty-Five Dollars (\$85) be transferred from the Water Enterprise Fund Surplus and the sum of Two Thousand Four Hundred Eighty-Eight Dollars (\$2,488) be transferred from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash) for a total amount of \$2,573 for the payment of the following bills of a prior fiscal year:

UMass Memorial Health	\$ 85
Snap-On Industrial	\$ 701
Pete's Tire Barn	\$1,556
Boston Mutual	\$ 231
Total	\$2,573

Article 2: Amend the Fiscal Year 2026 Town Operating Budget

BUDGET MOTIONS

MOTION 1: I move that the Fiscal Year 2026 Operating Budget, as adopted pursuant to Article 5 of the April 26, 2025 Spring Town Meeting and amended pursuant to Article 1 of the June 23, 2025 Special Town Meeting, be amended as follows, each line item to be considered as a separate appropriation for the purposes voted:

General Government: By increasing the General Government Appropriation from \$2,565,835 to \$2,697,953 so as to increase Line Item 1070 – “Treasurer/Tax Collector Salaries” by \$56,992 from \$166,060 to \$223,052; increase Line Item 1071 – “Treasurer/Tax Collector Wages” by \$16,086 from \$81,418 to \$97,504; increase Line Item 1130 – “Town Clerk Salaries” by \$19,040 from \$105,856 to \$124,896; increase Line Item 1160 – “Insurance and Bonding” by \$40,000 from \$350,000 to \$390,000; and raise and appropriate from the Fiscal Year 2026 tax levy and other general revenues of the Town the sum of \$95,420 and transfer the sum of \$36,698 from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash), for a total of \$132,118 to fund said increases.

MOTION 2: I move that the Fiscal Year 2026 Operating Budget, as adopted pursuant to Article 5 of the April 26, 2025 Spring Town Meeting and amended pursuant to Article 1 of the June 23, 2025 Special Town Meeting, be amended as follows, each line item to be considered as a separate appropriation for the purposes voted:

Land Use Departments: By increasing the Lane Use Departments Appropriation from \$549,503 to \$571,311 so as to increase Line Item 1210 – “Planning Board Salaries” by \$21,808 from \$103,222 to \$125,030; and raise and appropriate from the Fiscal Year 2026 tax levy and other general revenues of the Town the sum of \$21,808 to fund said increase.

MOTION 3: I move that the Fiscal Year 2026 Operating Budget, as adopted pursuant to Article 5 of the April 26, 2025 Spring Town Meeting and amended pursuant to Article 1 of the June 23, 2025 Special Town Meeting, be amended as follows, each line item to be considered as a separate appropriation for the purposes voted:

Protection of Persons and Property: By increasing the Protection of Persons and Property Appropriation from \$4,838,346 to \$4,843,746 so as to increase Line Item 1310 – “Fire Department Salaries” by \$5,400 from \$285,544 to \$290,944; and transfer the sum of \$5,400 from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash) to fund said increase.

MOTION 4: I move that the Fiscal Year 2026 Operating Budget, as adopted pursuant to Article 5 of the April 26, 2025 Spring Town Meeting and amended pursuant to Article 1 of the June 23, 2025 Special Town Meeting, be amended as follows, each line item to be considered as a separate appropriation for the purposes voted:

Department of Public Works: By increasing the Department of Public Works Appropriation from \$2,375,572 to \$2,400,572 so as to increase Line Item 1500 – “Highway Department Salaries” by \$25,000 from \$179,124 to \$204,124; and decrease the amount raised and appropriated from the Fiscal Year 2026 tax levy and other general revenues of the Town by \$55,000 and transfer the sum of \$80,000 from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash) to fund said increase.

MOTION 5: I move that the Fiscal Year 2026 Operating Budget, as adopted pursuant to Article 5 of the April 26, 2025 Spring Town Meeting and amended pursuant to Article 1 of the June 23, 2025 Special Town Meeting, be amended as follows, each line item to be considered as a separate appropriation for the purposes voted:

Library and Citizen’s Services: By increasing the Library and Citizen’s Services Appropriation from \$2,417,283 to \$2,428,900 so as to increase Line Item 1710 – “Local Access Cable Department Salaries” by \$8,819 from \$75,511 to \$84,330; increase Line Item 1711 – “Local Access Cable Department Wages” by \$2,798 from \$68,232 to \$71,030; and transfer the sum of \$11,617 from the Local Cable Receipts Reserved for Appropriation Account to fund said increases.

MOTION 6: I move that the Fiscal Year 2026 Operating Budget, as adopted pursuant to Article 5 of the April 26, 2025 Spring Town Meeting and amended pursuant to Article 1 of the June 23, 2025 Special Town Meeting, be amended as follows, each line item to be considered as a separate appropriation for the purposes voted:

Debt Service: By decreasing Debt Service from \$5,555,403 to \$5,409,090 so as to decrease Line Item 2002 – “Long Term Debt – Interest - Excluded” by \$7,967 from \$1,258,527 to \$1,250,560; decrease Line Item 2005A – “Short Term Debt Interest – Town – Non-Excluded” by \$3,355 from \$21,851 to \$18,496; and decrease Line Item 2005B – “Short Term Debt – Interest – Town – Excluded” by \$134,991 from \$1,845,196 to \$1,710,205.

MOTION 7: I move that the Fiscal Year 2026 Operating Budget, as adopted pursuant to Article 5 of the April 26, 2025 Spring Town Meeting and amended pursuant to Article 1 of the June 23, 2025 Special Town Meeting, be amended as follows, each line item to be considered as a separate appropriation for the purposes voted:

Employee Benefits: By decreasing the Employee Benefits Appropriation from \$4,869,643 to \$4,833,643 so as to decrease Line Item 3010 “Health Insurance/Employee Expenses” by \$36,000 from \$1,853,707 to \$1,817,707.

Article 3: Transfer Money Into the Capital Stabilization Fund

MOTION: I move that \$900,000 be transferred from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash) to be added to the sum already on deposit in the Capital Stabilization Fund.

Article 4: Transfer Money into the Stabilization Fund

MOTION: I move that this Article be indefinitely postponed.

Article 5: Transfer Money into the GDRSD Capital Stabilization Fund

MOTION: I move that \$250,000 be transferred from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash) to be added to the sum already on deposit in the Groton Dunstable Regional School District Capital Stabilization Fund.

Article 6: Transfer Within the Water Enterprise Fund

MOTION: I move that \$70,000 be transferred from the Water Enterprise Fund Surplus to the Fiscal Year 2026 Water Department Operating Budget for general expenses.

Article 7: Transfer Within the Four Corners Sewer Enterprise Fund

MOTION: I move that \$32,000 be transferred from the Four Corners Sewer Enterprise Surplus to the Fiscal Year 2026 Four Corners Sewer Operating Budget for general expenses.

Article 8: Transfer Within the Stormwater Enterprise Fund

MOTION: I move that \$50,000 be transferred from the Stormwater Enterprise Surplus to the Fiscal Year 2026 Stormwater Operating Budget.

Article 9: Cable Department Equipment Grant

MOTION: I move that \$16,000 be transferred from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash), to be expended by the Town Manager, for the purpose of adding to funds on Deposit in the Cable Department Equipment Grant Fund for the Local Access Cable Department.

Article 10: Assessors Quinquennial Certification

MOTION: I move that \$34,900 be transferred from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash), to be expended by the Town Manager, for the purpose of completing the five-year full certification program necessary to achieve full and fair cash value in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 40, Section 56, and Chapter 58, Sections 1, 1A, and 3, of the Massachusetts General Laws, and the Massachusetts Department of Revenue.

Article 11: Debt Service for Middle School Track

MOTION: I move that the Town appropriate, pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44B, Section 5, the sum of Thirty-Three Thousand Dollars (\$33,000) from the Community Preservation Fund Unallocated Reserve to fund the debt service for Fiscal Year 2026 for the Middle School Track Project, as authorized under Article 7 of the May 1, 2021 Spring Town Meeting.

Article 12: Repairs to Fitch's Bridge Head Wall

Mover: Alison Manugian

MOTION: I move that \$60,000 be transferred from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash), to be expended by the Town Manager, to repair the head wall at Fitch's Bridge, and all costs associated and related thereto.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

Article 13: Funding to Maintain the Former Nod Road Landfill

Mover: Peter Cunningham

MOTION: I move that \$100,000 be transferred from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash), to be expended by the Town Manager to maintain the former Nod Road Landfill in compliance with Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection requirements, and all costs associated and related thereto.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

Article 14: Repair Fire Alarm at the Country Club

Mover: Matt Pisani

MOTION: I move that \$60,000 be transferred from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash), to be expended by the Town Manager to repair and/or replace the Fire Alarm System at the Function Hall and Restaurant at the Groton Country Club, and all costs associated and related thereto.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

Article 15: Engineering Funds - Complete Streets Grant Work

Mover: Becky Pine

MOTION: I move that \$30,000 be transferred from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash), to be expended by the Town Manager, for the purpose of paying engineering costs, and other related costs, for complete streets design and planning work associated with successfully receiving grant funding from the Commonwealth under the Complete Streets Grant Program.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

Article 16: Proposed Amendments to the Groton Charter

Mover: Peter Cunningham

MOTION 1: I move to authorize the Select Board to petition the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for a special act to amend Section 3.2.4 and Section 4.2 (iii) of the Town Charter as set forth under Appendix A of the Warrant for the 2025 Fall Town Meeting, excluding proposed changes to other sections of the Charter; provided, however, that the General Court may make clerical or editorial changes of form only to the bill, unless the Select Board approves amendments thereto before enactment by the General Court, which amendments shall be within the public purposes of said petition.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

MOTION 2: I move to authorize the Select Board to petition the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for a special act to amend the Town Charter as set forth under Appendix A of the Warrant for the 2025 Fall Town Meeting, with the exception of the proposed changes to Section 3.2.4 and Section 4.2 (iii); provided, however, that the General Court may make clerical or editorial changes of form only to the bill, unless the Select Board approves amendments thereto before enactment by the General Court, which amendments shall be within the public purposes of said petition.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

Article 17: Additional Funding Cow Pond Brook Fields Project

Mover: Bruce Easom

I move, pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44B, Section 5, that One Hundred Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$115,000) be appropriated from the Community Preservation Fund Unallocated Reserve to provide additional funding for the Community Preservation Application 2026-05 "Cow Pond Brook Fields Improvements", originally approved under Article 8.D of the 2025 Spring Town Meeting for 100% design development to put the project out to bid.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

Article 18: Replace SCBA for the Fire Department

Mover: Matt Pisani

MOVER: I move that the Town appropriate Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$500,000), to be expended by the Town Manager, to purchase and replace the Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus of the Fire Department and all costs associated and related thereto, or to take any other action relative thereto; and that to meet this appropriation, the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, be authorized to borrow the sum of \$500,000 under and pursuant to Chapter 44, Section 7(1) of the General Laws, or pursuant to any other enabling authority, and to issue bonds or notes of the Town therefor; and, further, that the Town Manager be authorized to contract for the accomplishment of the foregoing purpose, including the expenditure of all appropriated funds and any funds received from any source for such purchase.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: 2/3s Majority

Article 19: Chapter 202 of the General Bylaws

Mover: Alison Manugian

MOTION: I move to amend the Code of the Town of Groton, by adding a new Chapter 202 entitled "Door-to-Door Solicitation" as set forth under Article 19 of the Warrant for the 2025 Fall Town Meeting.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

Article 20: Amend Chapter 161 – Licenses and Permits

Mover: John Reilly

MOTION: I move to amend the Code of the Town of Groton, by amending Chapter 161 "Licenses and Permits" by adding a new Article 2 entitled "Criminal History Background Checks" as set forth under Article 20 of the Warrant for the 2025 Fall Town Meeting.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

Article 21: Special Legislation

Mover: Rebecca Pine

MOTION: I move to authorize the Select Board to petition the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to enact special legislation to prohibit the use of Second Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides as set forth under Article 21 of the Warrant for the 2025 Fall Town Meeting, provided, however, that the General Court may make clerical or editorial changes of form only to the bill, unless the Select Board approves amendments thereto before enactment by the General Court, which amendments shall be within the public purposes of said petition.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

Article 22: Accept Bluebird Lane as a Town Way

Mover: Rebecca Pine

MOTION: I move to accept Bluebird Lane as a public way and to authorize the Select Board to acquire the necessary real estate interests for such way as set forth under Article 22 of the Warrant for the 2025 Fall Town Meeting.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

Article 23: Citizens' Petition – Create an Advisory Committee

Mover: Jack Petropoulos

MOTION: I move to require the creation of an Advisory Committee to develop and recommend a process for delivering Major Initiative Cost - Benefit Reports to Town Meeting; said Committee to consist of Jack Petropoulos, Kevin Lindemer, Stephen Lane, Bruce Easom and Jay Prager.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority
