

SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, MAY 18, 2026
APPROVED

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

Also Present: Mark Haddad, Town Manager; Kara Cruikshank, Executive Assistant to the Town Manager; Patrica DuFresne, Assistant Director of Finance/Town Accountant; Megan Foster, Principal Assessor; Tammi Mickel, Assistant Principal Assessor; Melisa Doig, Human Resources Director; Rachael Mead, Deputy Police Chief; Takashi Tada, Town Planner/Land Use Director.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Pine commended the Groton Business Association for the well-attended Spring GrotonFest over the weekend. She also reminded everyone of the Annual Town Election, to be held on Tuesday, May 19th, with polls open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Precincts 2 and 3 will vote at the Marion Stoddart Middle School Gymnasium, and Precinct 1 will vote at The Groton Center, 163 West Main Street, Groton. She also announced that the Memorial Day Parade will be held on Monday, May 25th.

Mr. Cunningham praised Senator John Cronin for his efforts as a member of the Senate Ways and Means Committee to increase Unrestricted General Government Aid in the Senate's proposed budget, which was well above what the House Ways and Means Committee approved. Mr. Haddad explained that it was approximately \$70,000 more than what was included in the Governor's original Budget.

Mr. Haddad announced that the Groton Women's Club and the Council on Aging are sponsoring a food drive for children in need through Loaves and Fishes. Collection times are Tuesday, May 19th, through Thursday, May 21st, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Groton Center.

Mr. Haddad reported that the town received a check for \$31,434 from the Groton Hill Music Center. This amount represents the proceeds from the Groton Community Fund for Quarter 1 of 2026. He stated that the Community Fund continues to be very successful.

Mr. Haddad read a statement into the record that he had emailed to the Select Board regarding the Town's Flock Cameras. The statement addressed inaccuracies and provided accurate information (see the attached memo). He and Deputy Police Chief Rachael Mead have been working together to establish a Working Group to further review the use of Flock Cameras and related public safety technology. Mr. Haddad would like to form this group immediately. He also stated that unless the Select Board votes to direct the Town Manager and Police Chief to terminate the agreement with Flock Safety pursuant to the contract's opt-out provisions, both he and the Police Chief intend to honor the final year of the agreement for FY2027.

Deputy Police Chief Rachael Mead attended the discussion and shared important information about the town's camera systems. She explained that there are two live cameras, while the others are license plate readers. The license plate readers do not collect personal data; they capture only images of license plates. The live cameras are strategically located throughout the town to assist with traffic investigations and enforcement. Access to the camera system is limited to three officers: the Deputy Chief, the Senior Sergeant, and the Detective. Deputy Chief Mead emphasized that the camera system is a valuable tool for the department. She also noted that data is not shared with federal agencies unless required by law and, under Massachusetts state law, is not shared with ICE. Additionally, she clarified that searches in the camera system can be conducted only by case numbers.

Ms. Pine thanked Deputy Chief Mead for the important information and found it reassuring, but she also emphasized the need to respect the Spring Town Meeting vote. At the last Select Board meeting, Ms. Pine said she had no problem honoring the Flock Cameras contract; she has since changed her mind. She hopes the town will terminate the contract now and, after the Working Group completes its process, will be willing to revisit it. Mr. Reilly said he wants the community to be safe, noted that there are cameras everywhere, and said he's disturbed by how it's been blown out of proportion.

Ms. Pine moved to direct the Town Manager and the Police Department to terminate the FY2027 contract with the Flock Camera company. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion.

Discussion

Mr. Cunningham believes it's a mistake to base public policy on social media. He said they've heard from the Police Department that the cameras are a valuable tool. Mr. Reilly said the Town Meeting approved the contract the first time it was brought forward. Ms. Manugian believes there is a need for public discussion to address concerns, but she supports the cameras. Ms. Pine believes they need to explore the cameras further.

The motion was defeated by a majority vote: 4 Against, 1 in Favor - Pine.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

None

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Ratify the Town Manager's Appointment of Tammi Mickel as Principal Assessor.

Mr. Haddad announced that Principal Assessor Megan Foster will be leaving the Town of Groton to take on a similar position in the Town of Andover. He further explained that Ms. Foster has served the Town of Groton in an exemplary fashion for more than eight years, including serving as the Principal Assessor since January 2021. Mr. Haddad personally thanked Ms. Foster for her efforts, wished her the best in her new role, and congratulated her.

Mr. Haddad emphasized the importance of training from within, noting that recruiting and retaining a qualified Principal Assessor has become increasingly difficult because the position is highly specialized and municipalities throughout Massachusetts are competing for a limited pool of experienced candidates. Recognizing this challenge, Mr. Haddad, along with his Finance Team,

has developed a training, mentoring, and succession-planning system to ensure continuity within the Finance Offices. As part of that effort, Tammi Mickel, the current Assistant Assessor, was appointed in 2022 with the intention of developing an internal succession plan for the Assessor's Office. She is a Certified Massachusetts Assessor and Mr. Haddad believes Ms. Mickel is fully prepared to assume the responsibilities of Principal Assessor and was pleased to appoint her. He explained that the search for a new Assistant Assessor is underway. He respectfully requested that the Select Board ratify his appointment.

Mr. Reilly made a motion to ratify the Town Manager's appointment of Tammi Mickel as Principal Assessor, effective June 1, 2026. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

2. FY 2026 Third Quarter Financial Update.

Mr. Haddad presented the Fiscal Year 2026 Third Quarter Financial Report, prepared by Patricia DuFresne, the Assistant Director of Finance/Town Accountant. Ms. DuFresne attended the discussion. He explained that the Motor Vehicle Excise tax remains strong and is similar to last year's figure. Both the Local Option Room Occupancy Tax and Local Option Meals Tax have performed well; Marijuana Revenue has increased, and the Groton Hill Music Community Fund continues to perform well. Revenue from the Country Club is breaking records, surpassing last year's figures by approximately \$10,000. Real estate and property tax collections are strong, and Mr. Haddad believes they will have another strong year of revenue. He emphasized that residents continue to be outstanding in paying their Real Estate and Personal Property Taxes. Overall, revenue is currently in line with where it was at this time last year. Ms. Pine inquired whether it would be legally possible to include a message on the tax bills stating, "If you are having difficulty paying your bill, please contact (and provide a phone number)." Ms. DuFresne was uncertain whether this was possible, but would find out. Mr. Cunningham briefly brought up PILOT payments. Mr. Haddad emphasized that people are very passionate about PILOTS. He explained that they have worked well with the Town's non-profit partners and noted that Groton School has increased its payment by \$35,000 this year.

Expenses have increased year over year. Ms. DuFresne explained that the budgets for the Fire Department, Police Department, Department of Public Works, and Legal Expenses have all risen compared with this time last year. She noted that they are unlikely to generate as much free cash for Fiscal 2027 as the Town has in past years. Mr. Haddad mentioned that the Town will still meet its revenue projections and have a balanced budget in FY 2026. He thanked Ms. DuFresne for her time.

3. Update on the 2026 Select Board Annual Goals.

Mr. Haddad reviewed the Board's goals and objectives and provided updates (reference the attached Fiscal Year 2026 Goals of the Groton Select Board).

4. Update on Select Board Schedule through Labor Day.

Monday, May 25, 2026-

No Meeting (Memorial Day)

Monday, June 1, 2026-

Regularly Scheduled Meeting (Annual Board Reorg)

Monday, June 8, 2026-	No Meeting
Monday, June 15, 2026-	Regularly Scheduled Meeting (Annual Appointment)
Monday, June 22, 2026-	No Meeting
Monday, June 29, 2026-	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, July 6, 2026-	No Meeting
Monday, July 13, 2026-	Regularly Scheduled Meeting (Line-Item Trans.) (Call for 2026 Fall Town Meeting)
Monday, July 20, 2026-	No Meeting
Monday, July 27, 2026-	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, August 3, 2026-	No Meeting (Kara Vacation)
Monday, August 10, 2026-	No Meeting (Mark's Vacation)
Monday, August 17, 2026-	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, August 24, 2026-	No Meeting
Monday, August 31, 2026-	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, September 7, 2026-	No Meeting (Labor Day)
Monday, September 14, 2026-	Regularly Scheduled Meeting

ITEMS FOR SELECT BOARD CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL

- 1. Consider Approving a One-Day Wine and Malt Beverages License for the Friends of Prescott for Open Mic Night to be held on Friday, June 12, 2026, from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.**

Ms. Manugian 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, June 12, 2026, from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

- 2. Consider Approving a One-Day Wine and Malt Beverage License for the Friends of Prescott's Paint and Sip: Water Lily to be held on Saturday, June 20, 2026, from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.**

Mr. Cunningham moved to approve a One-Day Wine and Malt Beverage License for the Friends of Prescott's Paint and Sip: Water Lily to be held on Saturday, June 20, 2026, from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

Authorize the Town Manager and One Member of the Select Board to Sign Warrants for the Next Thirty Days.

Mr. Reilly made a motion to authorize the town manager and one member of the select board to sign warrants for the next thirty days. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

On-Going Issues

- A. PFAS Issue** –The Towns of Groton, Dunstable, and the Consultant held a meeting. A Change Order will be issued for the remaining \$2 million for the next stage of the water main project. The remaining funds will be used to install pipes on Raddin Road, Hawtree Way, and Kemp Street in Dunstable. Mr. Haddad explained that the work is set to begin the day after school lets out. He also explained they are preparing to go out to bid for the next phase of the project, with bids due June 10th. This phase will include piping for Reedy Meadow Road, North Street to the Jersey Street Well,

and a portion of Groton Street in Dunstable. This is a large part of the project, which will include 78 residential connections to resolve PFAS contamination.

- B. UMass Satellite Emergency Facility –None
- C. Fire Department Staffing – None
- D. West Groton Dam –Squannacook River Dam Consultant, Tom Delaney, secured a \$3,000 state grant to conduct inspections.
- E. Main Street Study – None

SELECT BOARD LIASON REPORTS

Ms. Pine reported that the Non-Profit Council met last week. The Presidents of the Greater Lowell Community Foundation and the Community Foundation of Central Mass attended to explain how their organizations distribute grant funds to nonprofit organizations.

Approval of the Special Meeting Prior to Town Meeting of May 2, 2026, and Regularly Scheduled Meeting of May 4, 2026

Ms. Pine made a motion to approve the special meeting minutes of May 2, 2026, and the regularly scheduled minutes of May 4, 2026. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The Select Board adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

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

FISCAL YEAR 2026

GOALS OF THE GROTON SELECT BOARD

Category - Public Safety

Select Board Member Assigned – Peter Cunningham

In consultation with Police, Fire, and DPW Departments, establish a prioritized list of sidewalks, bicycle and roadway concerns and timelines for addressing them. Tasks to be considered:

- Striping Parking Spots on Main Street
- Narrowing Roads and/or other ways to create more pedestrian/bike access
- Paving section of roadway between Station Avenue and Broadmeadow Road
- Setting a Town wide speed limit

November 3, 2025 Update – The Town Manager has applied for a State Grant to hire an engineer to conduct a full study of Main Street. The purpose of the study would be to review the speed limit, crosswalks, parking spaces, bike lanes, etc. Grant award decision is expected in mid- November.

February 23, 2026 Update – While we have not yet received the State Grant to pay for the study of Main Street, the DPW Director received approval to utilize \$50,000 from the Town's Chapter 90 allocation to pay for the study. The Town has hired MDM Transportation Consultants to conduct the Study. The estimated cost of the Study is between \$75,000 and \$100,000. A placeholder article has been included on the 2026 Spring Town Meeting Warrant for the remaining funds should the Town not receive the Grant.

May 18, 2026 Update – MDM Transportation Consultants is well underway with the Main Street Study. Brian Callahan was able to secure more Chapter 90 Funding to cover the expense of the Study, along with an earmark from the Legislature that Representative Scarsdale was able to secure for the Town of Groton.

Budget Priorities – Funding

Select Board Member Assigned – Alison Manugian

Operating Budget

- Establish the process to determine the minimal staffing needed in all departments to continue functioning without an override.
- Beginning with the Groton Fire Department, establish process and requirements for, and conduct an in-depth cost benefit analysis of any proposed increase in staffing

November 3, 2025 Update – The Select Board and Finance Committee provided FY 27 Budget Development Guidance to the Town Manager. Now that Guidance has been provided, the Town Manager will begin developing the budget, including determining minimal staffing in all departments and staffing levels at the Fire Department.

February 23, 2026 Update – The Town Manager submitted a balanced budget (currently under review) that did not seek an override of Proposition 2½. As part of this budget, the Town Manager, in conjunction with the Finance Team, conducted a study (previously submitted to the Select Board and Finance Committee) comparing staffing levels to Towns with similar populations. The study showed that Groton is in line with other communities. In addition, the Select Board and Finance Committee voted unanimously to authorize a study of staffing the Fire Department with four Firefighter/EMTs on every shift over a six month period to determine if this is the proper staffing. A consultant will be hired to review/analyze the findings and submit a final report to the Select Board and Finance Committee in September, 2026 with the possible intent of seeking funding/override in the Fall of 2026 to permanently staff the Fire Department at this level.

May 18, 2026 Update – The 2026 Spring Town Meeting approved the balanced budget. Jack Parrow Associates and John Guilfoil Public Relations were hired to assist the Town with the Staffing Study and updating the Fiore Department website. The Town is still on track for a final report to be issued in September, 2026.

Capital Budget

- Considering input from the Town Manager and the Capital Planning Advisory Committee, review all town property and capital spending priorities for coming years

November 3, 2025 Update – The Capital Budget is under way. A five year spending plan will be developed that will include a review of priorities and town property.

February 23, 2026 Update – The Town Manager submitted the Five Year Capital Budget on December 31, 2025 that reviewed Town property improvements and the capital spending priorities over the next five years. This portion of the Goal is Complete.

May 18, 2026 Update – Goal Complete – No new update

Grant Funding

- Conduct in-depth analysis of available grants to help offset operating budget pressures

November 3, 2025 Update – As part of the Budget Development, grants will be examined as well.

February 23, 2026 – The Town Manager provided the Select Board with an analysis of Grants received over the last two fiscal years that showed the Town has received over \$5.8 million in Grant Funding to offset budget pressures. This portion of the Goal is complete.

May 18, 2026 Update – Goal Complete – No new update.

Structure of Government

Select Board Member Assigned – Becky Pine

- Review and determine action to be taken by the Select Board and staff on items identified in the Master Plan
- Develop a 3-year schedule to meet with all committees under the Select Board's purview. Consider combining or eliminating committees with similar or overlapping roles

November 3, 2025 Update – No action taken as of yet on this goal.

February 23, 2026 Update – The Town Manager is working with the Land Use Director/Town Planner to establish an action plan on items identified in the Master Plan. In addition, the Town Manager and Executive Assistant has established a schedule for the Select Board to meet with committees under the Select Board's purview. These meetings have already begun taking place.

May 18, 2026 Update – Still working with the Land Use Director/Town Planner on a Master Plan Implementation Plan. The Select Board has held meetings with all Committees they wanted to meet with under their purview.

Economic Development

Select Board Members Assigned – John Reilly and Matt Pisani

- Work with Groton Business Association and Destination Groton Committee to develop new sources of revenue.
- Encourage efforts to establish more restaurants in Groton, specifically in the former Station House property and available commercial sites in the Four Corners area

November 3, 2025 Update – The Town has been working with a prospective new buyer of the former Station House Restaurant. It is expected that a liquor license hearing will be held in early December.

February 23, 2026 Update – The potential sale of the Station House fell through, however, a new prospective buyer has come forward. There may be a liquor license hearing in the coming months. In addition, the Town Manager has been notified of a potential development in the Four Corners area. While it is in the beginning stages of investigation, there is some movement.

May 18, 2026 Update – No new update. Same as February 23rd update.

Ongoing Goals

All Members

- Continue advocating for a predictable increase in State support for education and municipal functions
- Present a FY 2027 Budget in conjunction with Peer Boards that meets the Town of Groton and GDRSD needs
- Continue support of DEI Committee and Affordable Housing Trust

November 3, 2025 Update – Budget development is underway.

February 23, 2026 Update – As stated above, the Proposed FY 2027 Budget has been submitted to the Select Board and Finance Committee. Boards, Committees and Staff have been advocating for additional state funding.

May 18, 2026 Update – No new update.