

**MINUTES
SPECIAL TOWN MEETING
MAY 5, 1999**

The Special Town Meeting was called to order at 7:35 by Moderator Robert Gosselin. There were 333 voters in attendance at 7:32 p.m., meeting the quorum requirement of 116 voters. Peter S. Cunningham, Chairman of the Board of Selectmen presented a Proclamation to Chief Rider declaring the week of May 10th Groton Peace Officers Week.

The moderator then addressed the meeting regarding the proper etiquette of Town Meeting and reminded those present that it was important to maintain decorum.

At 7:50 the meeting began with presentation by School Committee member Karen Riggert on behalf of the GDRS School Committee. She explained the majority position of the School Committee, which was in favor of the Chicopee Row site. At the conclusion of this presentation at 8:05, the chair allowed Peter O'Sullivan, School Committee member to give a minority report. At 8:16, Richard Powell, Selectman gave a minority report. At 8:24 Virginia Wood, Selectwoman, gave an additional minority report, showing a video of the Cow Pond Brook site as a possible alternative site to the Walker site. At 8:55 David Anderson, Chicopee Row resident and the sponsor of articles 4 and 5 was allowed to address the audience. The Fincom then gave its recommendation (favorable) to Article 1 and debate began in earnest.

ARTICLE 1: Moved and seconded that the Town vote to approve the amount of \$2.1 million debt authorized by vote of the Groton-Dunstable Regional School District on March 24, 1999, for additional costs of constructing and equipping the new high school, including but not limited to three (3) soccer fields, one (1) baseball field, two (2) softball fields and one (1) track, which vote provides that no debt shall be incurred thereunder if any member town votes, at a town election held within sixty (60) days from the date of adoption of said vote, in the negative on a question to exempt the amounts required to pay for the bonds or notes authorized therein from the provisions of Proposition 2 ½, so called (Mass. General Law, Chapter 59, Section 21C).

Speakers in favor of article 1 were Ben Hammer and Kristen Stone. Speaking in opposition to article 1 were Ed Kopec, Dick Norris, Bruce Clements, and Dick Nethercut.

Kay Cloutier then made a motion to move the question. The moderator heard the question and declared the question moved. The decision of the chair was challenged. Since to move a question requires a 2/3 vote, tellers were called and sworn as follows:

Kay Cloutier Gail Lyons

Robert Johnson Cynthia Martell

Karl Johnson Deborah Nicholson

The question was moved: 526 in favor, 58 opposed.

The main motion carried by majority: 392 in favor, 220 opposed.

ARTICLE 2: Moved and seconded that the Town vote to approve the amount of \$1.4 million debt authorized by vote of the Groton-Dunstable Regional School District on March 24, 1999, for additional costs of constructing and equipping the new high school, including but not limited to one (1) soccer field, one (1) baseball field, five (5) tennis courts and an access road, which vote provides that no debt shall be incurred thereunder if any member town votes, at a town election held within sixty (60) days from the date of adoption of said vote, in the negative on a question to exempt the amounts required to pay for the bonds or notes authorized therein from the provision of Proposition 2 ½, so called (Mass. General Law, Chapter 59, Section 21C).

Debate on the article included comments by Edna White, Stan Lacky, Dan Erastus, Tony DeBruyn, Bill Miller, Bruce Clements and Kay Cloutier, who moved the question.

The motion to move the question carried unanimously.

The main motion was defeated.

ARTICLE 3: Moved and seconded that the Town vote to request and encourage the Groton-Dunstable Regional School District to abandon its efforts to purchase the land on Chicopee Row in the estate of Helen Walker, as described in Article 1 of the warrant for the June 15, 1998 Special Town Meeting, and to exercise whatever rights it has to terminate the pending purchase and sale agreement for said land.

Speakers included Edna White, Brooks Lyman, Jane Allen.

Kay Cloutier moved the question.

The motion to move the question carried unanimously.

The motion was defeated.

ARTICLE 4: Moved and seconded that the Town vote to request and encourage the Groton-Dunstable Regional School District to conduct a new, independent, objective qualitative and financial assessment of the possibility of meeting the District's capacity and physical plant requirements by way of renovating and/or improving the existing Main Street Campus, including the possibility of moving the Middle School and/or the Elementary School from the Main Street Campus to another location or locations, and to present the findings of such assessment at a public hearing before purchasing the so-called "Walker Property" on Chicopee Row (being the property owned by the Estate of Helen Walker as described in Article 1 of the warrant for the June 15, 1998 Special Town Meeting").

Speakers included Robert Lewis, Jane Allen, David Anderson, Sue Peyton, Gloria Fuccillo, Brooks Lyman, Ben Hammer and Dick Powell.

The motion was defeated.

ARTICLE 5: Moved and seconded that the Town vote to request and encourage the Groton-Dunstable Regional School District to conduct a new, independent, objective qualitative and financial assessment of the possibility of constructing the proposed new High School at the Groton Country Club site, and to present the findings of such assessment at a public hearing before purchasing the so-called "Walker Property" on Chicopee Row (being the property owned by the Estate of Helen Walker as described in Article 1 of the warrant for the June 15, 1998 Special Town Meeting).

The motion was defeated.

It was moved and seconded that the meeting be dissolved.

The motion to dissolve carried unanimously.

The Special Town Meeting was dissolved at 10:20 pm.