

Town of Groton

The seal of the Town of Groton, Massachusetts, is a circular emblem. It features a central shield with an open book inscribed "HOLY BIBLE". Above the shield is a crest with a bent arm holding a sword. The shield is surrounded by a circular border containing the text "TOWN OF GROTON MASSACHUSETTS" at the top and "1655" at the bottom. The words "FAITH" and "LABOR" are also visible on the sides of the seal.

2022 Fall Town Meeting Packet

October 22, 2022

**FALL TOWN MEETING
MOTIONS
OCTOBER 22, 2022**

Articles 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8 – Consent Motion

Mover: Alison Manugian

MOTION: I move that the Town take affirmative action on Articles 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8, 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 this Article be indefinitely postponed.

Article 2: Amend the FY 2023 Town Operating Budget

Budget Motions

MOTION 1: I move that the Fiscal Year 2023 Operating Budget, as adopted pursuant to Article 5 of the April 30, 2022 Spring Town Meeting, be amended as follows, each line item to be considered as a separate appropriation for the purposes voted:

General Government: Increase the General Government Appropriation from \$2,281,925 to \$2,293,398 so as to increase Line Item 1130 – “Town Clerk Salaries” by \$9,021, from \$95,417 to \$104,438, increase Line Item 1131 – “Town Clerk Wages” by \$2,452, from \$73,588 to \$76,040, and transfer the sum of \$11,473 from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash) to fund said increases.

MOTION 2: I move that the Fiscal Year 2023 Operating Budget, as adopted pursuant to Article 5 of the April 30, 2022 Spring Town Meeting, be amended as follows, each line item to be considered as a separate appropriation for the purposes voted:

Land Use Departments: Increase the Land Use Departments Appropriation from \$454,670 to \$460,357 so as to increase Line Item 1240 – “Building Inspector Salaries” by \$5,687, from \$99,073 to \$104,760 and raise and appropriate from the Fiscal Year 2023 tax levy and other general revenues of the Town the sum of \$5,687 to fund said increase.

MOTION 3: I move that the Fiscal Year 2023 Operating Budget, as adopted pursuant to Article 5 of the April 30, 2022 Spring 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: Increase the Protection of Persons and Property Appropriation from \$4,671,029 to \$4,840,213 so as to increase Line Item 1311 – “Fire Department Wages” by \$169,184, from \$1,051,432 to \$1,220,616, and to fund said increase transfer the sum of \$100,000 from Fire & Emergency Medical Services Receipts Reserved, and transfer the sum of \$69,184 from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash).

Article 3: Amend FY 2023 Stormwater Enterprise Budget

MOTION: I move to amend the Fiscal Year 2023 Stormwater Enterprise Budget as adopted pursuant to Article 5 of the 2022 Spring Town Meeting by increasing said Appropriation from \$216,995 to \$241,095, and transferring the sum of \$24,100 from Stormwater Utility Rates and fees to fund said increase.

Article 4: Transfer - Capital Stabilization Fund

MOTION: I move that the sum of \$605,000 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 5: Transfer - Stabilization Fund

MOTION: I move that the sum of \$246,393 be transferred from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash) to be added to the sum already on deposit in the Stabilization Fund.

Article 6: Transfer - GDRSD Capital Stabilization Fund

MOTION: I move that the sum of \$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 7: 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 \$8,835 from the Community Preservation Fund Unallocated Reserve to fund the debt service for Fiscal Year 2023 for the Middle School Track Project, as authorized under Article 7 of the May 1, 2021 Spring Town Meeting and Article 9 of the April 30, 2022 Spring Town Meeting.

Article 8: Additional Funding for Master Plan

MOTION: I move that the sum of \$50,000 be transferred from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash), to be expended under the direction of the Town Manager, for the purpose of funding the update to Groton's Master Plan as prepared by the Planning Board and all costs associated and related thereto.

Article 9: Whitney Pond Well Site Construction

Mover: Tom Orcutt

MOTION: I move that the Town appropriate One Hundred Fifty Thousand (\$150,000) Dollars, to be expended under the direction of the Board of Water Commissioners, to pay all the costs of construction related to the development of the new Whitney Pond Well Site (Whitney Pond Well #3), including the payment of all costs incidental and related thereto, which amount shall be expended in addition to the \$700,000 previously appropriated for this project under Article 11 of the Warrant at the Town Meeting held on October 23, 2021, and that to meet this appropriation, the Town Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, is authorized to borrow said amount under and pursuant to G.L. c. 44, §8(5) or pursuant to any other enabling authority, and to issue bonds or notes of the Town therefor.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: 2/3s Majority

Article 10: Electronic Voting at Town Meeting**Mover: Michael Bouchard**

MOTION: I move that the sum of \$25,000 be transferred from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash), to be expended under the direction of the Town Manager, to purchase the necessary software and devices to allow for Electronic Voting at Groton Town Meetings, and all costs associated and related thereto.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

Article 11: Funding to Remove Building**Mover: Peter Cunningham**

MOTION: I move that the sum of \$30,000 be transferred from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash), to be expended under the direction of the Town Manager, to remove the building located at 159 West Main Street and shown on Assessors' Map 106 as Parcel 33, and all costs associated and related thereto.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

Article 12: CPC – Prescott Elevator**Mover: Becky Pine**

MOTION: I move that the Town adopt and approve the recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee established pursuant to Chapter 44B of the General Laws, for funds to supplement a potential state grant pursuant to the Municipal Americans with Disabilities Act Improvement Grant Program, to install an elevator at the Prescott School and all costs associated and related thereto, and to implement such recommendation, pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44B, Section 5, appropriate Seventy-Five Thousand (\$75,000) Dollars from the Community Preservation Fund Historical Reserve and One Hundred Seventy-Five Thousand (\$175,000) Dollars from the Community Preservation Fund Unallocated Reserve for a total of Two Hundred Fifty Thousand (\$250,000) Dollars, said funds to be expended by the Town Manager, however, should the Town not receive a state grant or other funding necessary to fully fund the elevator project by March 31, 2022, said appropriated funds shall be returned to the Community Preservation Fund.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

Article 13: Amend Chapter 105 – “Alcoholic Beverages”

Mover: Matt Pisani

MOTION: I move to amend Chapter 105 of the Code of the Town of Groton “Alcoholic Beverages, §105-1 “Open Container of Alcoholic Beverage”, by deleting §105-1 in its entirety and replacing it as set forth under Article 13 of the Warrant for the 2022 Fall Town Meeting.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

Article 14: Amend Chapter 196 – “Signs”

Mover: John Reilly

MOTION: I move to amend Section 196-5 of the Town of Groton Bylaws (entitled “Prohibited signs”), by inserting the following new paragraph J:

J. Signs that threaten violence against particular individuals or groups.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

Article 15: Citizens’ Petition – Rezone 797 Boston Road

Mover: John Reilly

MOTION: I move that this Article be indefinitely postponed.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

Article 16: Citizens’ Petition – Extend Center Sewer District

Mover: Don Black

MOTION: I move 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 225-49 (91 Chicopee Row) but only for the exclusive use of 91 Chicopee Row, 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.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

Article 17: Citizens' Petition – Reduce the Tax Rate

Mover: Guy Alberghini

MOTION: I move that residents who have lived in Groton for twenty-five (25) years or longer shall not have their property tax increased even if the appraised value of the property increases.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

Article 18: Citizens' Petition – Affordable Housing

Mover: Guy Alberghini

MOTION: I move that each development of three (3) houses or more shall have affordable housing.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

Article 19: Citizens' Petition – Side by Side Comparison

Mover: Guy Alberghini

MOTION: I move there shall be a side-by-side comparison in the Town Meeting Warrant as well as on the screen at the Town Meeting for everyone to see the current tax rate and what the tax rate will be if the article that is being voted on passes.

Quantum of Town Meeting Vote: Majority

Documents and Signage for 2022 Fall Town Meeting

Participating In Electronic Voting Demonstration

We will be voting on whether or not to adopt Electronic Voting at the 2022 Fall Town Meeting. To assure that voters understand how the technology works, we will conduct a demonstration.

Town Meeting Members may elect to participate by taking a clicker and following instruction provided as part of the demonstration.

Clickers are available inside the auditorium. Look for the Electronic Voting signs.

Clickers will be disabled until the demonstration starts.

Please be sure to return your clicker on your way out at the end of the meeting.



Electronic Voting for Town Meeting

Article 10 October 22, 2022

Presented by:
Electronic Voting Study Committee



Electronic Voting Study Committee

- Created by the Spring 2022 Town Meeting
- Chartered to:
 - explore the option of implementing electronic voting at Town Meeting
 - **provide a report** to the 2022 Fall Town Meeting addressing all issues associated with such a change including but not limited to cost, bylaws and administrative procedures
- Members appointed by the Moderator
 - Jack Petropoulos (Chair)
 - Carolyn Perkins (Vice-Chair)
 - Michael Manugian (Clerk)
 - Robert Anctil
 - Michael Bouchard (Town Clerk Rep)

Groton Town Meeting October 22, 2022

2



What is Electronic Voting (at Town Meeting)?

- Alternative method of voting at Town Meeting
 - Voters would use “handsets” to register a vote
 - Votes are “received” by a dedicated stand-alone computer
- Replaces “voter card”, voice vote and hand count methods
- Would be available **ONLY** for Town Meeting and only in person
 - This is not for elections or remote voting for town meeting
- Used by many types of organizations
 - 70 Massachusetts Towns (for open and representative town meetings)
 - US House of Representatives, NH House of Representatives
 - Delegate voting, audience response, shareholder voting, education....

2022 Fall Town Meeting Handout



Why Electronic Voting?

- Anonymous Votes
 - Eliminates social pressures and “herd voting”
 - A truer representation of votes
- Accurate
 - Produces an exact vote count
- No changes required to bylaws or Charter
- Secure
 - Radio frequency band-shifting
 - No Internet, Wi-Fi or Bluetooth connections

Majority	Results Display / Raw / Absolute	Poll / Passed	Polling Status / Closed
ARTICLE 3. To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds in the Treasury, the sum of \$200,000.00 or a greater or lesser sum, to the FY 2021 Operating Budget for Legal Expenses to cover costs associated with protecting the Town's interests in the construction of a natural gas facility and site remediation at the DPW facility, or take any other action relative thereto.			
Yes	28		
No	22		
Total	50		

Groton Town Meeting October 22, 2022

4



Electronic Voting – How it Works



Electronic Voting Demonstration

Groton Town Meeting October 22, 2022

5



Electronic Voting – Costs

- \$25,000 one time cost to include:
 - 600 attendee hand held devices
 - Base system receiver and backup
 - Standalone dedicated laptops for system use
- 10 year (or more) expected life
- Minimal / manageable ongoing “soft costs”
 - E.g. : testing, setup, cleaning, batteries, etc.
- Can be expanded beyond 600 hand held devices
 - Minimal incremental costs





Electronic Voting – What would be different?

- Method of voting
- Recommended Procedures (examples):
 - Handset issuance and return
 - “Voting Window”
- Recommended Policies (examples):
 - System testing
 - Electronic Voting “Assistants”
- What’s Not Different: Town Meeting debate

Groton Town Meeting October 22, 2022

7



Electronic Voting Study Committee Recommendations

- Adopt electronic voting
- Perform public outreach and education
- Develop specific policies and procedures, promoting
 - Anonymity
 - Security
 - System verification

Groton Town Meeting October 22, 2022

8



Questions? Comments?

Thank you!



Electronic Voting Study Committee (EVSC)

Electronic Voting Policy and Procedure Recommendations

The Electronic Voting Study Committee can only make recommendations. The actual policies and procedures applicable to electronic voting will be determined by the Town Moderator, Select Board and/or Town Manager. However, the Town Moderator, Town IT Director, and Town Manager have reviewed and support these recommendations.

Recommendation	Notes
Whether rented or purchased, provide for a backup voting computer and backups for all vote receivers.	A vote receiver is the device connected to the voting computer that communicates with the clickers. Backups will allow electronic voting to continue in the event of an equipment failure.
Create a video available to the public prior to the first Electronic Voting Town Meeting to explain how Electronic Voting will work in Groton.	This allows voters to become comfortable with the system prior to the meeting.
Test all clickers, receivers, and voting computers before each Town Meeting	This is to ensure that they all work properly.
Use a stand-alone computer for voting with no internet or Wi-Fi connection.	This is to prevent interference from anyone via the internet or Wi-Fi.
Connect the voting computer to the Town Meeting display system via physical cable only.	This allows us to display voting countdowns and results without danger of internet or Wi-Fi interference.
If an additional display is used for the Town Moderator to review voting results before they are displayed to all, the display should be hard-wired to the voting computer.	This allows the Moderator to review results without danger of internet or Wi-Fi interference. Another option is to connect the voting computer to the moderator display only, so that voters don't see the countdown or results.
Prohibit use of Wi-Fi hotspots and all other forms of radio frequency use in the 2.4 GHz band	This is to prevent radio frequency interference from disrupting the communications between the clickers and the vote capture computer. Announce this prior to the Town Meeting and at the start of each day of Town Meeting. School Wi-Fi will still work, and cell phones will still be able to access the Internet.
Provide volunteer assistance to any voter with a disability that might interfere with their use of a clicker.	Any voter should be able to request the assistance of a volunteer who can sit with them through the meeting and help them vote electronically.
Clean all clickers before Town Meeting	This ensures that clickers are safe for voters to use.

Recommendation	Notes
When a clicker is given to a voter at check-in, do not associate the clicker number with the voter	This is to preserve voter anonymity and prevent the tracking of an individual vote to a voter. Other towns have found that they lose a negligible number of clickers, even when they don't take special care to track them.
Plan a special introductory Electronic Voting lesson at the start of the first Town Meeting where EV is used.	Allot extra time to allow voters to test and ask questions so that they are comfortable with the mechanics of Electronic Voting.
Test all clickers at the start of each day of Town Meeting	This is to assure each voter that their clicker is working properly. Note that the town of Dover can do this in approximately 2.5 minutes including the time to replace suspect clickers.
Explain to voters at the start of each meeting day what they should do if they suspect that their clicker is not working properly.	This allows a voter to quickly replace a suspect clicker with minimal disruption to the meeting.
Explain proxy voting and that it is prohibited.	This will help reduce the likelihood of proxy voting, i.e., one person casting a vote for another person.
Require each voter to turn in their clicker whenever they leave the meeting room	This will help prevent proxy voting. The voter will receive their device back when they return to the meeting.
Use the same time limit for each voting period.	Consistency will reduce the likelihood that a voter misses the chance to vote.
Clearly announce the start of each voting period.	Use consistent terminology to call for each vote to reduce the likelihood that a voter misses a chance to vote.
Clearly announce the end of each voting period.	Use consistent terminology to reduce the likelihood that a voter misses a chance to vote.
Delete all individual voting details after the Moderator has called the result of each vote.	This is to preserve voter anonymity and prevent the tracking of an individual vote to a voter. Yes/No vote totals for each vote will be preserved for the Town Clerk's records.
Create a volunteer EV Assistance Committee	This will be under the control of the Town Moderator and will assist in handing out and retrieving clickers and will provide other assistance to Town Meeting voters, as necessary.
Create a procedure to ensure that unused clickers will not be recognized by the voting system.	This will ensure that clickers which are not handed out to voters cannot be used.
Schedule a practice run under the control of the Moderator so that the Moderator can test voting procedures prior to the first Electronic Voting Town Meeting.	The Moderator is willing to open this session to the public.

Electronic Voting - Frequently Asked Questions

The Electronic Voting Study Committee has compiled a set of questions about electronic voting. The answers to these questions are based on the assumption that the policy and procedure recommendations made by the Electronic Voting Study Committee are adopted by town officials. The actual policies and procedures applicable to electronic voting will be determined by the Town Moderator, Select Board and/or Town Manager. However, the Town Moderator, Town IT Director, and Town Manager have reviewed and support these recommendations.

General Questions About the Electronic Voting System

Why is the town considering Electronic Voting?

The town meeting is being asked to consider Electronic Voting as a method to enable anonymous voting at town meeting and to document actual vote counts. Anonymous voting should minimize “go with the flow” voting and result in a truer representation of votes.

How can you assure attendees that their votes are anonymous and not recorded and traceable?

While each handset has a number, that number is not recorded with the user. Voting will not be displayed as votes are taken. Only the vote totals will be announced by the Moderator after a voting window has expired. Further, after each vote, it is being recommended that vote detail be deleted.

How is vote detail data handled? How long is it kept?

After each vote, it is being recommended that vote detail be deleted. Only the vote totals will be retained. Please remember that handsets are not associated with individuals, further preserving anonymity.

Can Electronic Voting be used in town or state elections?

No. The system can only be used for in-person voting at town meeting. It does not replace, and cannot be used for, voting at the polls on election day, early voting or voting by mail for elections.

Can Electronic Voting be used to vote absentee or vote remotely for town meeting?

No. There are no provisions in statute for town meeting absentee voting or remote voting. Electronic Voting cannot be used in these ways.

What do the 70 or so Massachusetts towns using Electronic Voting think about it?

Committee members contacted 15-20 towns to assess this question. No committee member received negative feedback. In fact, all feedback was very positive for ease of use and reliability. To the committee’s knowledge, no town has discontinued use of Electronic Voting.

Using Electronic Voting During Town Meeting

How do I know when to vote?

It will be very similar to what happens now. The Moderator will state that we will now vote on a motion and will describe the motion being voted on and what proportion of votes need to be yes votes in order for the motion to pass. He will indicate the length of time that the voting period will be open. He may do this once at the start of Town Meeting for all votes or at the start of an individual vote. He will then say something to the effect that the voting period is now open. At this point you may cast your vote. At the

Electronic Voting – Frequently Asked Questions

close of the voting period, the Moderator will say something to the effect that the voting period has closed. At this point you may no longer cast or change your vote.

Can I change my vote during the voting window?

While the voting window is open, you can change your vote by pressing the yes or no button on the handset. You can do this more than once. The last vote received by the system is the one that counts.

If I hit the wrong button accidentally, can I change my vote?

You can change your vote on a motion for any reason as long as you do it before the end of the voting period for that motion. The system will use the last vote you cast.

What if I press Yes or No and then decide I want to abstain?

If you have pressed yes or no and wish to abstain, you may press the Abstain button on your handset. You must do this while the voting period is open. Only yes and no votes will be counted.

I pressed a button on my handset during the discussion of a motion and it didn't respond. What's going on?

You will only see a response to a button press while the voting period is open. That is the way the system is designed to work.

What if I don't want to vote on a particular motion?

If you don't want to vote on a motion, you can simply do nothing or you can press the Abstain button. Only yes and no votes will be counted.

What if the moderator has called the results of a vote and I wish to change my vote?

Once the Moderator calls the result of the vote, that vote is confirmed. Just as with the manual voting process, a voter may ask for a vote to reconsider a motion. This would follow the same rules currently established for a vote to reconsider.

Will individual votes be displayed?

At the discretion of the Moderator, vote totals may be displayed after he/she announces the vote. Individual votes will never be displayed. Please also remember that handsets are not associated with a voter.

Will Electronic Voting be used for all voting at town meeting?

Yes. All votes will be conducted using the same voting system.

What will happen if there are more attendees than handsets?

The recommended policy is that all voting take place using the same method. If there are not enough handsets for all attendees, voting will be by the current voter card system.

Will the use of Electronic Voting speed up Town Meeting? How much time will it take?

Unlike the use of voter cards, voting is not instantaneous. Electronic Voting uses a defined "voting window". The voting window time would be determined for Groton by the Town Moderator, but is typically set for 30 seconds with towns that currently use these systems. That means that each vote would take 30 seconds (the voting window). However, since each vote is an accurate count, there would be no requirement for "tellers, please!" and a hand count of votes too close to call by the Moderator. It is expected that the use of Electronic Voting will not materially change the time required to vote at town meeting.

Electronic Voting – Frequently Asked Questions

Will Electronic Voting increase town meeting attendance?

The experience of the towns contacted by the committee suggests that attendance is not increased nor decreased when using electronic voting.

What's to prevent a group from coming at the start of Town Meeting and leaving their handsets with friends to vote for them so they can leave early?

Giving your vote or voting device to another person is called proxy voting. This is not allowed under any circumstances, whether we're voting by voice, cards, a show of hands, printed ballot, or electronic device. If proxy voting is observed, it should be promptly reported to the Moderator.

Won't Electronic Voting change the nature of our town meeting to not see who and how many people are voting for an article?

Electronic Voting will change the nature of voting at town meeting, but not the discussions that precede voting. With anonymous voting, public pressure on individuals, real or perceived, to vote a certain way on an article will be minimized and result in a truer representation of votes.

Electronic Voting Security and Reliability

How reliable are the electronic voting systems?

Electronic Voting is being used in over 70 towns throughout Massachusetts, as well as well recognized political, religious and commercial organizations. The vendors under consideration have stellar performance ratings from their users. Each vendor will warranty their hardware for 10 years. Software support is available from each vendor under each's contract terms.

From a technical standpoint how does the system work?

Each electronic voting system vendor has their own proprietary protocols and system configurations. They all involve handset used by each voter and a receiver with which the handsets are paired. Each handset sends an encrypted radio signal using a channel in the 2.4 Ghz band to a receiver plugged into a USB port on the voting computer. The receiver polls the handsets which have been paired to it. When it detects that a handset button has been pressed, the receiver sends a confirmation message to the handset indicating that the vote has been received, and that response is displayed on the handset screen.

What assurance do I have that no one can interfere with or alter a particular vote?

The voting computer is not connected to Wi-Fi, Bluetooth or the Internet. The only way to get control of it would be to sit at the computer and use its keyboard or mouse. There will be an operator at the computer during Town Meeting so this computer will always be attended. The only connection from the computer will be via cable to one or more display devices so that the results can be viewed by the Town Meeting Moderator and/or attendees.

The connection from the handsets to the voting computer is by an encrypted radio signal. Although it is theoretically possible to intercept, decrypt, change, encrypt and resend a signal, it is extremely difficult to do so. We have heard of no cases where this has occurred where this technology has been used.

In an extreme situation it is possible to overload the radio band used by the handset-receiver system. However, since Town Meeting takes place indoors, we can detect and control usage of devices which

Electronic Voting – Frequently Asked Questions

might interfere. That is the reason that we will prohibit the use of hotspots during Town Meeting, for example.

Can someone bring a handset from the same vendor and use it on our system?

There are many ways in which a person could obtain a handset which is compatible without our system. However, each handset we will use must be individually paired with our receiver. The receiver will not respond to a handset which has not been paired. If we discard a handset for any reason, it will be unpaired first.

If I bring my handset home, can I use it at the next town meeting?

No. Prior to each town meeting, handsets are inventoried and paired to the system. “Missing” handsets are removed as eligible.

What prevents the town from recording how I vote on a particular article?

The town has no interest in an individual’s voting. Handsets are not identified to an individual, so the vote of a particular handset cannot be linked to an individual. After each vote, detailed vote information will be erased. Only the Town Moderator, Town Clerk and potentially the IT Director has access to vote totals.

Can “someone” change my vote in the database?

As described in a different FAQ, Electronic Voting systems rely upon encrypted radio signals to transmit over changing channels (i.e. channel hopping). The system is not connected to Wi-Fi, Bluetooth or the Internet. The system is very secure from being hacked. The Moderator, Town Clerk and IT Director have access to the voting “receiver” and vote totals. No one has computer privileges to change individual votes.

What assurance do I have that my vote is accurately counted?

After you press a button on your handset, the voting computer will receive your vote and send a confirmation back to the screen of your handset. That confirmation is your assurance that the system has received and counted your vote.

Electronic Voting costs

How much does a system cost?

This town meeting is being asked to approve \$25,000 to purchase an Electronic Voting system. This will purchase a redundant set of receivers, 600 handsets and redundant dedicated laptops, along with necessary accessories such as storage/transport bags.

Aside from the cost of the system, what will the other costs be?

There will be some administrative costs to set up, test clean and store the system. These costs appear to be minimal and manageable with existing staff. Handset batteries should be replaced every two to three years. The current cost of a battery is \$.18.

Electronic Voting System Procedures

How will handsets be distributed and collected?

Handsets will be distributed at town meeting voter check-in. The handset number will not be recorded to the person to whom it is assigned. Handsets will be returned at the end of the meeting.

How will I know that my handset is working?

A test will be performed at the start of each Town Meeting which will allow you to see the actual vote you send to the system.

How will the town meeting know the electronic voting system is working properly?

The system will be tested during each town meeting's setup. Each handset will be exercised to insure it is performing accurately. It is anticipated that, prior to the commencement of a town meeting, handsets will be tested by attendees with a "test vote". Handsets are then assumed to be working.

What happens if the electronic voting system is not functioning properly?

If there is a perceived problem with the system during the meeting, such as vote totals being very low or high, the meeting will be held pending resolution to the problem. If necessary, the meeting will revert to voting by card.

What if I suspect that my handset has a problem?

You can stand and request a new handset. A volunteer will take your handset and give you a new one.

What if the voting computer crashes?

There will be a backup computer available. Switching to the backup computer should take a few minutes. Note that there will be a backup computer, backup receivers (which capture the votes sent by handsets), and backup handsets. In other words, there are backups for every component of the system.

What if the electronic voting system fails completely during a Town Meeting?

The Town Meeting will revert to voting by card.

How will handsets going missing be prevented?

The honor system. Attendees will be asked to return handsets at the end of each meeting. There will be collection attendants at each exit to remind attendees to deposit their handset into the collection box.



Groton Town Meeting Amendment Work Sheet

Select one of the shaded sections by marking the box.
Please print neatly and cross through all words that do not apply.

☐

I move to amend the {main motion | amendment}

by striking the words _____

and by substituting the words _____

☐

I move to amend the {main motion | amendment}

by striking in its entirety {Section | Paragraph} # _____

and by substituting in its place the following: {Section | Paragraph} # _____

☐

I move to amend the {main motion | amendment}

by adding the following {words | sentence | paragraph} _____

after the words _____

Name (printed): _____ Signature: _____

Street: _____ Date: _____

See instructions and information on reverse

2022 Fall Town Meeting Handout

Continuation

Instructions for using this form:

- ☐ Neatly print all information.
- ☐ Select the shaded section to be used by marking the check box.
- ☐ In the selected section, cross through all words that are not to be part of the amendment.
- ☐ Fill in the identification information and signature at the bottom of the form.
- ☐ Request to be recognized by the Moderator and then move the amendment by reading the completed form.
- ☐ Present the completed and signed form to the Moderator.

From the *Groton Town Meeting Procedures* booklet:

Amendments

If a voter wished to change a motion in some fashion, the procedure is to amend the motion. All motions to amend must be in writing and must state exactly how the voter wishes to change the motion so that the Moderator can know exactly what it is the voter wants to do before ruling on the motion or putting it to a vote. A voter who wishes to amend a *main motion* must have the amendment in writing and available to hand to the Moderator *before* rising to offer the amendment. The Moderator may refuse to put to the Meeting an amendment which is not immediately available in writing – the Moderator also will rule out of order an motion to amend which changes the original motion so drastically that, in the Moderator’s opinion, the motion is no longer within the “four corners” of the article.

An amendment may consist of adding, deleting, or substituting words in the motion. It may take the form of a “motion to substitute”: a different motion. Sometimes a speaker tries to amend “the article,” but this is improper language. It is the motion on the floor, not the article on the Warrant, that is to be amended.

A motion to amend requires only a majority vote, even though the motion to be amended may require two-thirds or more for final passage.

General Information:

- ☐ An amendment may be made to modify either the main motion already on the floor or another amendment that has been previously moved.
- ☐ All motions to amend must be presented to the Moderator in writing.
- ☐ All amendment must keep the amended motion within the general scope of the originally posted warrant article. This is referred to as “within the four corners” of the article.
- ☐ Town counsel may be asked to review an amendment and present an opinion on the legality of the amendment prior to being accepted by the Moderator for consideration by town meeting.
- ☐ Amendments should (if possible) be carefully written and reviewed prior to town meeting.
- ☐ **It is strongly recommended that the Moderator be made aware of the intention to present an amendment well before the start of Town Meeting or as soon as possible within Town Meeting.**

**TOWN OF GROTON
COMMITTEE INTEREST FORM**

Town Government needs citizens who are willing to give time in the service of their community. If you are interested in serving, on a voluntary basis, on boards and committees within the Town, please complete this form and return to:

**TOWN OF GROTON, SELECT BOARD
173 MAIN STREET, GROTON, MA 01450**

Date: _____

Name _____
First M.I. Last

Mailing Address _____

Circle One GROTON, 01450 WEST GROTON, 01472

Telephone No. (home) _____ (cell) _____

Preferred e-mail Address _____

Occupation _____

Background _____

Specific committees in which you are interested:

Department Name	Vacancies
Affordable Housing Trust	1
Agricultural Commission	1
Commemorations & Celebrations Committee	1
Commission on Accessibility	1
Great Pond Advisory Committee	3
Historic District Commission	2
Historical Commission	1
Housing Partnership	1
Invasive Species Committee	1
Local Cultural Council	5
Old Burying Ground Commission	2
Park Commission	1
Personnel Board	1
Scholarship Committee	2
Sustainability Commission	1
Weed Harvester Committee	2
Williams Barn Committee	1
Zoning Board of Appeals (Full Members and an Alternate)	2