

**Warrant, Summary, and Recommendations**

# **TOWN OF GROTON**



## **SPECIAL TOWN MEETING JUNE 23, 2025**

**Marion Stoddart Building Auditorium  
344 Main Street, Groton, Massachusetts 01450**

**Beginning Monday, June 23, 2025 @ 7:00 PM**

# Introduction to Groton Town Meeting

Voters are familiar with casting ballots in local and state elections, but they have another important civic duty in towns, the Town Meeting.

## What is Town Meeting?

The Town Meeting is the legislative body in the town form of government in Massachusetts. Town Meeting is a formal gathering of registered voters who propose, debate and vote on measures. Groton holds at least two Town Meetings per year. As this is a Special Town Meeting, there is a quorum requirement of two (2%) percent of the Town's Registered Voters in order for the Meeting to commence.

## What is a warrant?

The warrant is the official notice to voters that a Town Meeting is scheduled. The warrant includes the date, time, location and a description of each subject to be acted on at Town Meeting. In Groton, the warrant must be posted in two public places 14 days in advance of Town Meeting. In Groton, every household is also notified of the meeting by postcard with a link to the Warrant. "[T]he warrant must contain a sufficient description of what is proposed so as to constitute an adequate warning to all the inhabitants of the town."<sup>1</sup> "Every action taken at the meeting must be pursuant to some article in the warrant and must be within the scope of such article."<sup>2</sup>

## How does Town Meeting proceed?

Voters attending Town Meeting must first check in with the clerks and receive an electronic voting handset which is required to vote. The meeting typically acts on the articles in the order that they are printed in the warrant. For each article, a main motion is made and seconded by voters and placed by the moderator on the floor for debate. Permission of the moderator is required to speak. The moderator presides and regulates the proceedings, decides all questions of order, and calls and declares all votes. After debate has ended, the moderator will call for a vote by use of the electronic voting handset. Please see page 3 of this Warrant for a full explanation of how Electronic Voting will work at Town Meeting.

<sup>1</sup> *Town Meeting Time: A Handbook of Parliamentary Law* (page 19) Massachusetts Moderators Association, Fourth Edition, 2024.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

**Who can attend?**

Town Meeting is open to the public. Only Groton voters are entitled to attend, speak and vote. Non-voters may be required to sit in a separate section. Non-voters may ask the moderator to speak on the topic of the debate.

**How long is town meeting?**

Town Meeting concludes when all articles on the warrant have been acted upon. Town Meeting may conclude in one session or adjourn for subsequent sessions.

# Electronic Voting at Town Meeting

Voting at Town Meeting will be conducted using an electronic voting system purchased by the Town of Groton as authorized by Town Meeting in October, 2022. Instead of using placards to be raised and counted, voters will use wireless handsets to cast their vote quickly, accurately and privately.



## Voter Check-In

At check-in, voters will be given a handset. No record is made of which voter receives which handset. All handsets will be tested prior to the meeting. Voters physically unable to use a handset, will be seated in a manual-count section and their votes will be counted by tellers. For those with visual impairments, large handsets with braille are available.

## Test Vote

At the beginning of the meeting, the Moderator will conduct a test vote to get everyone comfortable with the voting procedures.

## Proxy Voting Prohibited

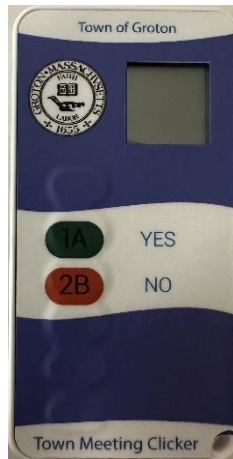
The handset given to a voter at check-in is for the exclusive use of that voter. Voting with a handset that has been issued to another individual is strictly forbidden.

## Voting

When the Moderator announces it is time to vote:

- Press 1A (green button) for YES →
- Press 2B (red button) for No →
- If you wish to not vote, press no buttons

## Handset Display



The display on the handset:

- OK means the system receiver has received your vote
- A "1" for Yes or "2" for No shows the vote the system received.
- The small "R" at the top of the screen indicates the handset is communicating with the receiver
- The icons in the top left indicate the WiFi signal strength.

## Help Desk

A Help Desk will be able to assist voters who have trouble with using the handset. If a handset malfunctions, a voter will receive a new handset.

## Handset Return

If you leave the meeting temporarily, please keep the handset with you. If the meeting ends or you leave, return the handset to the check-in table.



## **Town Meeting Access for Voters with Disabilities**

**Parking** – Universally accessible parking spaces are available in the parking lot in front of the Groton Dunstable Marion Stoddart Building. There is a ramp providing access from the parking lot to the front door of the Building.

**Wheelchair Accessible & Companion Seating** – Wheelchair spaces, seating for people with mobility issues and companion seats are available in the center aisle on both sides of the auditorium.

**Sign Language** – A Sign Language Interpreter will be provided for the hearing impaired, upon request, at least one week prior to the meeting.

**Speaking at Town Meeting** – There will be volunteers available to bring hand-held microphones to voters who have mobility issues or cannot stand in line and wait at the microphones.

**Restrooms** – Accessible restrooms are available near the entrance to the auditorium.

**Transportation to Town Meeting** - The Council on Aging van will be available to Groton residents attending Town Meetings at no charge. All riders will be at the meeting prior to the start. The van is wheelchair accessible. Your reservation can be made by calling the Senior Center at 978-448-1170. Seats will be filled on a first come, first serve basis.

**Questions or concerns** - If you or a member of your household has questions or would like to request a sign language interpreter, please contact the Select Board's Office at Town Hall at 978 448-1111 at least one week before the Town Meeting.

**SPECIAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT**  
**JUNE 23, 2025**

Middlesex, ss.  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
To any Constable in the Town of Groton

Greetings:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are hereby required to notify and warn said inhabitants of the Town of Groton qualified to vote on Town affairs to assemble in the Marion Stoddart Building Auditorium, 344 Main Street, Groton, Massachusetts on Monday, the twenty-third day of June, 2025 at Seven O'clock in the evening to consider the following:

**Article 1:     *Amend the Fiscal Year 2026 Town Operating Budget***

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Fiscal Year 2026 Operating Budget as adopted under Article 5 of the April 26, 2025 Spring Town Meeting and vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds a sum or sums of money as may be necessary to defray the expenses of the Town for Fiscal Year 2026, or to take any other action relative thereto.

***Finance Committee***  
***Select Board***  
***Town Manager***

**Select Board:**  
**Finance Committee:**

**Summary:**     *At the April 26, 2025 Spring Town Meeting, the Operating Assessment for the Groton Dunstable Regional School District was approved in two parts. The Town approved an Operating Assessment of \$27,777,948 that was part of the Balanced Budget. There was an additional appropriation of \$673,250 for the School District that was contingent on an override of Proposition 2½. The proposed override was defeated at the Annual Town Election and therefore the contingency was not met. The Select Board, Town Manager and Finance Committee do not want to see any more reductions to the School District and asked the Town Manager to work with the District to see how reductions can be made to the Municipal Budget, along with increasing revenue, to meet the needs of the School District in FY 2026. Proposed reductions to the Municipal Budget, along with proposals to increase revenues will be presented to Town Meeting to balance the Budget.*

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**Article 2:     *Amend the Fiscal Year 2026 Capital Budget***

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, and/or borrow pursuant to any applicable statute, a sum or sums of money, to be expended by the Town Manager, to amend the Fiscal Year 2026 Capital Budget that was approved under Article 6 of the April 26, 2025 Spring Town Meeting by increasing the appropriations for the Municipal Building Repairs and creating a new Police Department Capital Budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

***Town Manager***

**Select Board:**

**Finance Committee:**

**Summary:**   *As part of balancing the Town's Operating Budget as outlined in Article 1, the Town Manager is proposing to remove all minor Capital Items from the Operating Budget and move them to the Capital Budget. A detailed Report will be provided to the Special Town Meeting by the Town Manager.*

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Hereof fail not and make return of your doings to the Town Clerk on or before time of said meeting.

Given under our hands this 4<sup>th</sup> Day of June in the year of our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Five.

*Alison S. Manugian*

Alison S. Manugian, Chair

*Rebecca H. Pine*

Rebecca H. Pine, Vice-Chair

*Peter S. Cunningham*

Peter S. Cunningham, Clerk

*John F. Reilly*

John F. Reilly, Member

*Matthew F. Pisani*

Matthew F. Pisani, Member

OFFICERS RETURN

Groton, Middlesex

Pursuant to the within Warrant, I have this day notified the Inhabitants to assemble at the time, place, and for the purpose mentioned as within directed. Personally posted by Constable.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Constable

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Duly Posted

\_\_\_\_\_





# Groton Town Meeting Amendment Work Sheet

Select one sections **ONLY** 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*

## 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
Design Review Committee	1
Great Pond Advisory Committee	2
Greenway Committee	2
Housing Authority	1
Housing Partnership	3
Local Cultural Council	2
Old Burying Ground Commission	3
Scholarship Committee	2
Sustainability Commission	1
Weed Harvester Committee	3
Williams Barn Committee	1
Zoning Board of Appeals (Associate Member)	1

Town of Groton  
Select Board  
173 Main Street  
Groton, MA 01450

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