

Warrant, Summary, and Recommendations

TOWN OF GROTON



2025 SPRING TOWN MEETING

**Groton-Dunstable Regional High School Gymnasium
703 Chicopee Row, Groton, Massachusetts 01450**

Beginning Saturday, April 26, 2025 @ 9:00 AM

Attention – Voters and Taxpayers

***THE BUDGET HANDOUT FOR ARTICLE 5 IS AVAILABLE
IN THE BACK OF THE WARRANT***

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.

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. “The warrant must contain a sufficient description of what is proposed so as to constitute an adequate warning to all the inhabitants of the town.”¹ “Every action taken at the meeting must be pursuant to some article in the warrant and must be within the scope of such article.”²

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.

¹ *Town Meeting Time: A Handbook of Parliamentary Law* (page 12) Johnson, Trustman and Wadsworth, Third Edition, 2001.

² *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.

Explanation of a Consent Agenda

A consent agenda is a procedure to group multiple main motions into a single motion for voting. A consent agenda saves time by eliminating the reading of multiple motions and explanations when there are no objections or questions. In Groton, a consent agenda generally consists of articles unanimously supported by the Select Board and Finance Committee. Articles that change by-laws or introduce new spending are typically not included. In this warrant, the Select Board has grouped articles in consent agendas and labeled them for easy reference.

How Consent Agendas Work

As the first step to act on a consent agenda, the moderator will read the titles of the included articles. A voter who wishes to remove an article from the consent agenda for separate debate and vote should state “hold.” The held article will be set aside and acted on after the vote on the consent agenda. After the meeting agrees on the contents of the consent agenda, there will be no debate and the moderator will immediately call for a vote. Every motion included in the consent agenda will either pass or fail as a group. Voters should read the warrant and review the proposed consent agendas to identify articles they wish to remove for separate consideration.

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 High School. There is a ramp providing access from the parking lot to the front door of the High School.

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

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 in the main lobby of the High School.

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.

SPRING TOWN MEETING WARRANT APRIL 26, 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 Groton-Dunstable Regional High School Gymnasium in said Town on Saturday, the twenty-sixth day of April, 2025 at Nine O'clock in the morning, to consider all business other than the election of Town Officers and on the twentieth day of May, 2025, between the hours of 7:00 A.M. and 8:00 P.M., at an adjourned session thereof at the following locations:

Precinct 1	The Groton Center 163 West Main Street	Precincts 2 & 3 Marion Stoddart Bldg. Gymnasium 344 Main Street
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to give their ballots for:

Vote for One	Board of Assessors	3 Years
Vote for One	Board of Health	3 Years
Vote for Two	Select Board	3 Years
Vote for One	Commissioner of Trust Funds	3 Years
Vote for Two	Groton-Dunstable Regional School Committee	3 Years
Vote for One	Groton Electric Light Commission	3 Years
Vote for Two	Park Commission	3 Years
Vote for Two	Planning Board	3 Years
Vote for One	Planning Board	2 Years
Vote for One	Sewer Commission	3 Years
Vote for One	Sewer Commission	1 Year
Vote for Two	Trustees of the Groton Public Library	3 Years
Vote for One	Trustee of the Groton Public Library	1 Year
Vote for One	Water Commission	3 Years
Vote for One	Groton Housing Authority	5 Years
Vote for One	Groton Housing Authority	3 Years

QUESTION 1: Shall the Town of Groton be allowed to assess an additional \$673,250 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purpose of funding the Assessment of the Groton Dunstable Regional School District for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025?

Yes ___ No ___

QUESTION 2: Shall the Town of Groton be allowed to assess an additional \$780,904 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purpose of funding six (6) additional Firefighter/EMTs for the Groton Fire Department for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025?

Yes ___ No ___

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*Will be presented as one Consent Motion

**CPA Funding Recommendations will be presented as One Consent Motion

***Annual Consent Agenda. To be presented as one Motion

Article 1: Hear Reports

To see if the Town will vote to hear and act on the report of the Select Board and other Town Officers and Committees, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Select Board

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously

Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Summary: *To hear reports of Town Boards, Committees and Commissions and to accept the annual report and other reports that may be presented to Town Meeting.*

Article 2: Elected Officials Compensation

To see if the Town will vote to set the compensation for the elected officials of the Town for the ensuing year, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously

Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Summary: *To provide compensation for elected officials as proposed by the Town Manager. The Town Moderator is proposed to receive a salary of \$1,000 in FY 2026.*

Article 3: Wage and Classification Schedule

To see if the Town will vote to amend and adopt for Fiscal Year 2026 the Town of Groton Wage and Classification schedule as shown in Appendix B of this Warrant, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Select Board

Town Manager

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously

Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Summary: *The purpose of this Article is to set the wage and classification schedule for the three (3) employees (Executive Assistant to the Town Manager, Human Resources Director and IT Director) covered by the Personnel Bylaw. Under the policy of the Select Board, these employees receive the same benefits as contained in the Town Supervisors' Union Contract. These employees will receive a three (3%) percent cost-of-living adjustment in Fiscal Year 2026.*

Article 4: Appropriate FY 2026 Contribution to the OPEB Trust Fund

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 be added to the Other Post-Employment Benefits Liability Trust Fund as authorized by Chapter 32B, Section 20, of the Massachusetts General Laws, or to take any other action relative thereto.

**Select Board
Town Manager**

**Select Board: Recommended Unanimously
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously**

Summary: *The purpose of this article is to fund the Town's OPEB Liability. The Select Board and Finance Committee have adopted a funding policy for this purpose. One of the funding goals is to commit to an annual appropriation to the Trust that would keep the Net Present Value Liability from growing until such time as the Town can begin to pay down the liability. In Fiscal Year 2026, the anticipated amount necessary for this purpose is estimated to be \$200,000. This Article will seek an appropriation of \$200,000 from Free Cash to add to the OPEB Liability Trust Fund.*

Article 5: Fiscal Year 2026 Annual Operating 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 as may be necessary to defray the expenses of the Town for the next Fiscal Year (2026), and act upon the budget of the Finance Committee, or to take any other action relative thereto.

**Finance Committee
Select Board
Town Manager**

**Select Board: Recommended Unanimously (Balanced Budget)-See Report for Override Information
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously (Balanced Budget)-See Report for Override Information**

Summary: *In accordance with Section 6 of the Town Charter, the Finance Committee conducts its annual budget process by receiving the Town Manager's proposed balanced budget on or before January 31st; meeting with department heads and boards; holding public budget hearings in preparation for issuing its recommendations to Town Meeting; and presenting its budget recommendations at the Spring Town Meeting. The budget handout for this Article is contained in Appendix A of this Warrant. Please also see the Finance Committee's and Town Manager's Report which includes the Finance Committee's and Select Board's recommendations.*

Article 6: 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 in Fiscal Year 2025 and thereafter, for the purpose of funding the Fiscal Year 2026 Capital Budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Summary: *The following is the proposed Town Manager's Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2026:*

Item #1 – Pick-Up Truck **\$75,000** **Highway**

Summary: *This is a scheduled replacement. The average life of a pick-up truck is approximately 7 years. By replacing one vehicle every couple of years, this will allow the fleet to stay in good shape. They are front line pick-ups used for day-to-day operations as well as snow plowing.*

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Item #2 – Excavator **\$200,000** **Highway**

Summary: *This piece of equipment has turned out to be a tremendous time saver for the Department. The versatility from digging, tree pruning, log splitting and grapple work, setting curb and loading debris is outstanding. Trading in the machine a little sooner rather than later will retain its trade value tremendously.*

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Item #3 – IT Infrastructure **\$40,000** **Town Facilities**

Summary: *This item in the Capital Budget was established over ten years ago and has been very successful. In Fiscal Year 2026, the following items will be purchased/upgraded with this allocation: 10 replacement computers; Replace aging servers and storage arrays; Investment to expand the network and keep equipment and maintenance costs current; Network switch upgrades and increased wireless coverage; and Improve door lock and security system maintenance.*

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Item #4 – Municipal Building Exterior Repairs **\$50,000** **Town Facilities**

Summary: *This appropriation will be used to continue to maintain all municipal buildings by performing various maintenance activities to prevent major breakdowns in all municipal building infrastructure. Priorities continue to change when it comes to the minor repairs and upgrades in the municipal buildings. With a set line item which is separate from minor capital, the decision making can be flexible and change priorities instead of just doing it because it is on a list. Furnaces, a/c units, flooring and painting are some of the small items this capital program could handle with the flexibility provided.*

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Item #5 – Fork Lift/Mini Loader **\$125,000** **Transfer Station**

Summary: *This is a vital piece of equipment at the Transfer Station. It is used to load the two balers located at the facility. In addition, it is used to move the various recyclables around the facility. This piece of equipment is a work horse and this should be considered a scheduled replacement.*

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Item #6 – Repaint Library Interior

\$50,000

Library

Summary: *The Library needs a color refresh. The original paint, applied over 25 years ago, shows wear and tear throughout, and is also an outdated color scheme. By repainting the ceilings, walls, door jams, and interior window trim, and updating the color scheme of the three-story, 17,000 sq. ft. building, space can be revitalized to create a more modern but still warm, welcoming, and inviting interior to complement the other large-scale improvements made since 1999. This investment will not only enhance all public space as a whole but will be in keeping with the library's continued adaptation of services and resources to meet the community's ever evolving wants and needs. To reduce the disruption to our patrons and staff, this will be the first year of a two-year phased painting project.*

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously

Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Item #7 – Property Improvements

\$25,000

Park Department

Summary: *The Park Commission has been working over the past several years developing a strategy to address deficiencies in the various Park Department Properties located throughout Groton. Since FY 2015, the Town has appropriated \$25,000 each year so that the Park Commission can develop a capital improvement program that will allow them to keep the various park locations in good shape and avoid a major construction project.*

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously

Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Item #8 – Police Cruiser/Motorcycle

\$91,010

Police Department

Summary: *Purchase of a police cruiser and motorcycle, and related equipment for replacement of vehicles that are no longer cost effective to maintain. This allows for less mileage per year, better maintenance scheduling, assignment of cars to officers and for a programmed replacement schedule that ensures line cars are rotated out at reasonable mileage and wear. Unmarked cars are rotated in the same fashion. The Town had leased a motorcycle in the past on a revolving three year basis. In an effort to save money, this year the Town will purchase a motorcycle to extend the life of the vehicle to five or more years.*

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously

Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Item #9 – Command Vehicle

\$73,718

Police Department

Summary: *There are two command vehicles within the Police Department; one for the Chief and one for the Deputy Chief. This year, the Deputy Chief's command vehicle will be replaced. This should be considered a scheduled replacement.*

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously

Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Item #10 – Parking Lights/Building Lighting

\$12,000

Police Department

Summary: *This funding will be used to install 3 light poles for the parking lot. The lot originally had 2 light poles which are no longer standing. The project needs new underground conduit, concrete bases, light poles, and electrical work. Three poles allow for sufficient coverage while minimizing light pollution. In addition, the funding will be used to replace outdated fluorescent lighting in the department training room which is original to the building.*

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously

Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Item #11 – Electronic Control Device – “Tasers” \$10,500 Police Department

Summary: *The current Electronic Control Device (ECD, Taser) is at end-of-life and not serviceable. Axon products provide integrated data storage for both the ECD and future acquired Body-Worn-Cameras (BWC). The total cost of the ECD replacement is \$92,000. The Town received a JAG grant in the amount of \$50,000. The Town is responsible for four annual installments of \$10,500 for a total cost to the town of \$42,000. This is the first of four payments.*

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*
Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Item #12 – Portable Light Tower \$14,000 Police Department

Summary: *This will be used to purchase an additional tower for recurring large events requiring multiple light towers to be used at the same time, (Fireworks, Halloween, serious motor vehicle accidents).*

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*
Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Item #13 – Search and Rescue Drone \$14,000 Police Department

Summary: *This Search & Rescue Drone will replace an obsolete drone that is used for large area searches for lost people/suspects.*

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*
Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Item #14 – Golf Carts \$25,553 Country Club

Summary: *In FY 2023, the Town replaced the fleet of twenty-five golf carts with 21 new Yamaha gas powered carts and four Yamaha electric carts using a five year lease-to-purchase agreement at an annual cost of \$25,553. This is the fourth of five payments.*

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*
Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Item #15 – Ventrac Attachments \$10,918 Country Club

Summary: *In FY 2024, the Town purchased a Ventrac unit using a five year lease-to-purchase agreement at an annual cost of \$10,918. This is the second payment of five payments. The Ventrac unit is a most versatile piece of equipment. The attachments already in use include units for plowing, aeration, seeding, landscaping and mowing difficult terrain. This vehicle is used on a daily basis.*

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*
Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Item #16 – Greens Equipment – Truckster XD**\$14,736****Country Club**

Summary: *This is a heavy payload 4x4 utility truck that will allow the transfer of up to 3,500 lbs. of debris, sand and loam to and from areas of the Course. This utility cart will replace the other utility cart in the Club’s fleet that is over a decade old and is becoming unreliable. This vehicle will be used on a daily basis in the Spring and Fall when course cleanup is a daily occurrence. During the Summer months, it will be used for various Course projects. This vehicle will be paid for over five years. This is the third of five payments.*

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*

Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Item #17 – Greens Equipment – Greens Mower**\$10,000****Country Club**

Summary: *This item replaced a greens mower. The old mower will be converted to a tee & collar unit, and the old tee & collar unit will be converted to a greens roller unit. Ideally, the Club will purchase a new mower every five years. This is the second of four payments for this equipment.*

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*

Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Item #18 – PFAS Free Structural FF Gear**\$80,000****Fire and EMS**

Summary: *PFAS has been used in firefighting gear for a long time due to its ability to withstand high temperatures and repel water and oils. Firefighters have long been known to suffer from a highly increased rate of cancers that are caused by the use of PFAS. These chemicals are shown to contribute or are responsible for cases of breast, kidney, and testicular cancers within the fire service. Effective January 1, 2027, manufacturers and sellers of personal protective equipment for firefighters will be prohibited from knowingly selling gear containing “intentionally-added PFAS” chemicals, meaning PFAS chemicals or products that break down into PFAS chemicals that are intentionally added to the product during manufacturing. This equipment will be replaced over the next two years.*

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*

Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Town Manager

Article 7: Community Preservation Funding Accounts

To see if the Town will vote to make the following appropriations from the Community Preservation Fund:

Allocation of Community Preservation Funds to the following sub accounts:

CPC Operating Expenses:	\$ 29,000
Open Space Reserve:	\$113,241
Historic Resource Reserve:	\$113,241
Community Housing Reserve:	\$113,241
Unallocated Reserve:	\$763,687

or to take any other action relative thereto.

Community Preservation Committee

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*

Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Community Preservation Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Summary: *This is an accounting procedure that is necessary so that the Community Preservation Committee will have access to the funds raised during Fiscal Year 2026. Except for the CPC Operating Expenses, none of these funds will be spent without additional approval at Town Meeting.*

Article 8: Community Preservation Funding Recommendations

To see if the Town will vote to adopt and approve the recommendations of the Community Preservation Committee for Fiscal Year 2026, and vote to implement such recommendations by appropriating a sum or sums of money from the Community Preservation Fund established pursuant to Chapter 44B of the Massachusetts General Laws, and by authorizing the Select Board, with the approval of the Community Preservation Committee, to acquire, by purchase, gift or eminent domain, such real property interests in the name of the Town, or enforceable by the Town, including real property interests in the form of permanent affordable housing restrictions and historical preservation restrictions that will meet the requirements of Chapter 184 of the Massachusetts General Laws, as may be necessary or proper to carry out the foregoing, or to take any other action relative thereto.

CPC Proposal A: West Groton Rail Trail \$70,000

Summary: *The West Groton Rail Trail Committee is requesting \$70,000 to initiate the legal process of securing the rights to a section of rail line (from the river bordering Ayer to Mile Post B41.10 which is about 0.4 miles north of Hollingsworth and Vose) from the MBTA, as well as funding the related environmental filings. To Fund this Project, \$4,000 will come from the Open Space Reserve and \$66,000 to come from the Unallocated Reserve.*

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously
Community Preservation Committee: Recommended (6 In Favor, 1 Abstained – Barringer)

CPC Proposal B: Conservation Fund – FY 2026 \$200,000

Summary: *The Conservation Commission is requesting \$200,000 to be added to Groton’s Conservation Fund to help preserve land for open space, agricultural recreation, and forestry activities, as well as to protect water resources and wildlife habitat. The Conservation Fund allows the Town to act swiftly when a priority parcel becomes available. In the past, the Conservation Fund has been used to purchase conservation restrictions, agricultural preservation restrictions, and fee ownership of conservation land within Groton. To Fund this Project, \$140,000 will come from the Open Space Reserve and \$60,000 to come from the Unallocated Reserve.*

Select Board: Recommended (4 In Favor, 1 Against – Manugian)
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously
Community Preservation Committee: Recommended (6 In Favor, 1 Abstained – Barringer)

CPC Proposal C: FY 2026 Housing Funds Request \$200,000

Summary: *The Affordable Housing Trust (AHT) is requesting \$200,000 from the Community Housing Reserve in order to continue its work of creating and supporting Affordable Housing in Groton. This money will allow the AHT to respond swiftly if suitable property for Affordable Housing becomes available on the market. Community Housing Funds can be used to acquire, create, support, rehabilitate and/or restore affordable housing if acquired or created with CPA funds. The full amount to be paid from the Community Housing Reserve.*

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously
Community Preservation Committee: Recommended (6 In Favor, 1 Abstained – Barringer)

CPC Proposal D: Cow Pond Brook Fields Improvements \$100,000

Summary: *The Town Manager’s Office and Park Commission are requesting \$100,000 to conduct an existing condition review for the large area owned by the Town of Groton along Cow Pond Brook Road which is currently used by athletic groups and residents for recreation. The funding will also support the development of a schematic design for the space, including preliminary permitting discussions, as well as the completion of 50% of the design development. The full amount to be paid from the Unallocated Reserve.*

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously
Community Preservation Committee: Recommended (6 In Favor, 1 Abstained – Barringer)

CPC Proposal E: Housing Coordinator – FY 2026 \$63,402

Summary: *This application is requesting \$63,402 in CPA funding from the Community Housing category to fund the wages and benefits of the Housing Coordinator position for the Town of Groton (25-hours/week). The full amount to be paid from the Community Housing Reserve.*

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously
Community Preservation Committee: Recommended (6 In Favor, 1 Abstained – Barringer)

CPC Proposal F: Bancroft Castle Preservation \$153,000

Summary: *The Groton Historic Commission is requesting \$153,000 to implement the restoration work recommended in the previously funded Phase 1 engineering analysis. This funding will help preserve the Bancroft Castle structure, and help to address public safety hazards for visitors. The full amount to be paid from the Historic Reserve.*

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously
Community Preservation Committee: Recommended (6 In Favor, 1 Abstained – Barringer)

CPC Proposal G: Prescott Community Center \$70,000

Summary: *The Friends of Prescott and Town Manager’s Office are requesting \$135,000 to restore elements of the building. The proposed work includes refurbishing wall materials, removing failing suspended ceilings and replacing them with a new, period-appropriate tin ceiling system, eliminating suspended tubular fluorescent lighting, and replacing it with new period appropriate yet energy efficient lighting, removing carpeting and restoring the hardwood flooring, and replacing the front doors with custom-designed doors to match the building’s historical style. The CPC has voted to partially fund the project with \$70,000 from the Historic Reserve.*

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously
Community Preservation Committee: Recommended (6 In Favor, 1 Abstained – Barringer)

CPC Proposal H: Cow Pond Baseball Improvements \$84,330

Summary: *The Groton Dunstable Youth Baseball League with the support of the Park Commission, is requesting \$84,330 to remodel eight dugouts, remodel four batting cages, and rebuild the pitching mounds on all four baseball fields at the Cow Pond Brook Fields. The full amount to be paid from the Unallocated Reserve.*

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously
Community Preservation Committee: Recommended (6 In Favor, 1 Abstained – Barringer)

CPC Proposal I: Town Field Improvements \$352,963

Summary: *The Town Manager’s Office and Park Commission are requesting \$378,963 to renovate the major league baseball diamond at Town Field. This project builds on the previously funded design study and will renovate the infield, place new backstops, place the players benches on concrete pads and landscape the outfield. The CPC has voted to partially fund the project with \$352,963 from the Unallocated Reserve.*

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously
Community Preservation Committee: Recommended (6 In Favor, 1 Abstained – Barringer)

CPC Proposal J: Curatorial Storage \$62,675

Summary: *The Groton Historical Society is requesting \$62,675 to improve storage conditions on the third floor of the Boutwell House, where approximately 30% of the GHS’s collection of historic objects are housed. The project will include minor conservation of items, repairs to the walls and ceilings, installation of storage shelving, and the addition of mechanical ventilation to reduce extreme summer temperatures. The full amount to be paid from the Historic Reserve.*

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously
Community Preservation Committee: Recommended (6 In Favor, 1 Abstained – Barringer)

CPC Proposal K: Williams Barn Restoration \$158,972

Summary: *The Williams Barn Committee is requesting \$158,972 for renovations to the 185-year-old historic barn structure. The work will include repairing a section of the foundation wall, replacing sills, the gable end fascia, and soffit boards, replacing two cracked support beams, and adding handrails to improve safety for all. The full amount to be paid from the Historic Reserve.*

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously
Community Preservation Committee: Recommended (6 In Favor, 1 Abstained – Barringer)

Community Preservation Committee

Article 9: Proposed Amendments to the Groton Charter

To see if the Town will vote 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 in Appendix C of this Warrant, 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, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Charter Review Committee

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously

Finance Committee: No Position

Charter Review Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Summary: *The Groton Charter requires periodic review every ten years. In 2024, a Committee was formed to review the Charter and determine if changes were warranted. The Committee solicited input from the public and has reviewed suggestions and concerns during meetings over the last six months. The revised Charter seeks to (1) address this input; (2) address the appointment of the Police Chief, Fire Chief and Town Clerk; and (3) clear up inconsistencies in the current Charter. The proposed changes are shown in Appendix C of this Warrant beginning on page 73. A vote in favor of this Article will be the first step in adopting the revised Charter. A vote against this Article will allow the current Charter to remain in force.*

Article 10: Amend Chapter 81 “Town Meetings” of the Code of the Town of Groton

To see if the Town will vote to amend Chapter 81 “Town Meetings” of the General Bylaws of the Town by deleting Section 81-4(A) in its entirety and replacing said section with the following:

§81-4 Scheduling of Business

- A. All business, other than the election of officers and the determination of such matters as by law are required to be by ballot, shall commence at times set forth in the warrants for said town meetings approved by the Select Board. The annual election of officers and other voting by ballot shall be held on the third Tuesday in May of each year, at which time the polls shall remain open from 7:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m.

or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously

Finance Committee: No Position

Summary: *The current bylaw states that the Annual Election shall be held on the fourth Tuesday following the first session of the Spring Town Meeting. In some years, when the Town Meeting is not held prior to the last Monday in April, the current wording could set the Annual Town Election the day after Memorial Day. To avoid that in the future, this Article proposes setting the Annual Town Election every year on the third Tuesday in May, regardless of when the first session of Town Meeting is held.*

Article 11: Disposition of Town Owned Land on Hoyts Wharf Road

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to dispose of by sale, or lease for a period not to exceed 99 years, that certain property or portions thereof located off Hoyts Wharf Road consisting of portions of Assessors Parcels 249-51 and 249-57, containing approximately 7.14 acres, and shown as “Lot 2” and “Parcel A” on a plan entitled “MESA Site Plan” by Dillis & Roy, dated February 12, 2025, a copy of which is on file in the Town Clerk’s office, for such minimum consideration and on such terms and conditions as the Select Board deems advisable, to provide affordable housing, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Affordable Housing Trust

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously

Finance Committee: No Position

Summary: *The Affordable Housing Trust has identified a parcel of Town owned land suitable for development of affordable housing. The purpose of this article is to allow the Affordable Housing Trust to issue a Request for Proposals to invite a response from a developer to create affordable housing (possibility a group home) on this site.*

Article 12: Amend Chapter 125 “Demolition Delay” of the Town Bylaws

To see if the Town will vote to amend Chapter 125 “Demolition Delay” of the General Bylaws of the Town by deleting Chapter 125 in its entirety and replacing it with a new Chapter 125 “Demolition Delay” as follows (please see Appendix D of this Warrant for the red-lined changes to the current Chapter 125):

Chapter 125 Demolition Delay

§ 125-1. Intent and purpose.

- A. The Demolition Delay Bylaw is enacted for the purpose of preserving and protecting significant buildings within the Town of Groton. Such buildings reflect distinctive features of the architectural, cultural, economic, political or social history of the Town, and their preservation protects these historic architectural assets which contribute to the overall culture of the community.
- B. The intent of the bylaw is to provide an opportunity to develop preservation solutions for distinctive and preserved historic properties threatened with demolition. The bylaw is intended to encourage owners and townspeople, with assistance from the Groton Historical Commission, to seek out persons who might be willing to purchase, preserve, rehabilitate or restore such buildings rather than demolish them, and to limit the detrimental effect of demolition on the historical architectural resources of the Town. To achieve these purposes, the Groton Historical Commission is empowered to advise the Building Inspector with respect to the issuance of permits for demolition of significant buildings, and, where appropriate and consistent with the intent and purpose of this chapter, to allow demolition under conditions designed to minimize the loss of distinctive features of significant buildings. The issuance of demolition permits is regulated as provided by this bylaw.

§ 125-2. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

APPLICANT — Any person or persons who is either the owner or legally representing the owner and applying for a permit to demolish any building or structure. The applicant may not apply for a permit to demolish any building or structure on behalf of a future owner. The process outlined in this Bylaw resets upon the transfer of ownership of a property.

BUILDING — A structure enclosed within exterior walls or firewalls, built, erected and framed of a combination of any materials to form a structure for the shelter of persons, animals or property.

BUILDING INSPECTOR — The Town of Groton Building Commissioner, who is charged with the administration and enforcement of the State Building Code, 780 CMR, and is authorized to issue demolition permits.

COMMISSION — The Groton Historical Commission, which is charged with the identification, documentation and preservation of the historical resources of Groton.

DEMOLITION — Any act of pulling down, destroying, removing, razing or moving a building or commencing the work of moving or of total or substantial destruction with the intent of completing the same. Substantial demolition is defined as irreparably removing or altering any historically significant feature of a structure or removing twenty-five (25) percent of the volume of the structure or twenty-five (25) percent of the roof structure. This includes rebuilding any portion of a structure in which more than fifty (50) percent of the materials are replaced.

DEMOLITION PERMIT — The permit issued by the Building Inspector as required by the State Building Code for the demolition, substantial demolition or removal of a building.

HISTORICALLY OR ARCHITECTURALLY SIGNIFICANT BUILDING — Any building which, in whole or in part, is at least 75 years old, or is of unknown age and:

- A. Is listed on, or is a contributing building within an area listed on, the National Register of Historic Places, or is the subject of a pending application for such listing, or is eligible for such listing; or
- B. Is included in the Cultural Resources Inventory prepared by the Historical Commission; or
- C. Has been determined by vote of the Historical Commission to be a significant building after a finding by the Historical Commission that the building meets one or more of the following three criteria:
 - (1) Historical importance. The building meets the criterion of historical importance if it:
 - (a) Has character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the Town of Groton, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or the nation; or
 - (b) Is the site of an historic event; or
 - (c) Is identified with a person or group of persons who had significant influence on society; or
 - (d) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historic heritage of the community.
 - (2) Architectural importance. The structure meets the criterion of architectural importance if it:
 - (a) Portrays the environment of a group of people in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or
 - (b) Embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type; or
 - (c) Is the work of an architect, master builder or craftsman whose individual work has influenced the development of the Town of Groton or a wider region; or
 - (d) Contains elements of architectural design, detail, materials or craftsmanship, which represents a significant innovation.
 - (3) Geographic importance. The structure meets the criterion of geographic importance if:
 - (a) The site is part of or related to a square, park, or other distinctive area; or
 - (b) The structure, as to its unique location or its physical characteristics, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, village center, or the community as a whole.

§ 125-3. Procedure.

- A. No permit for the demolition of a significant building or part thereof shall be issued except as provided in this chapter, as well as in conformity with the provisions of other laws and bylaws applicable to the demolition of

buildings and the issuance of permits generally.

- B. Application contents. Every application for a demolition permit shall be filed with the Building Inspector and shall contain the following information:
- (1) The address of the building to be demolished;
 - (2) The owner's name, address and telephone number;
 - (3) A brief description of the type of building and the condition requiring issuance of the permit;
 - (4) Age of building as established by the Board of Assessors, deed or documentation verifying year of construction;
 - (5) A brief description of the proposed reuse, reconstruction or replacement;
 - (6) Photographs clearly depicting the building in question.
- C. Within seven (7) days after receipt of any application for a demolition permit, the Building Inspector shall forward a copy to the Commission. No demolition permit shall be issued during this time.
- D. Within thirty (30) days after receipt of a copy of the application for demolition permit from the Building Inspector, the Historical Commission or its designee shall make a determination of architectural and/or historical significance ("determination of significance"). Upon determination by the Historical Commission that the building is not architecturally and/or historically significant, the Historical Commission shall so notify the Building Inspector and the applicant in writing. Upon receipt of such notification, or after the expiration of thirty (30) days from the date of application submission to the Building Department if the Building Inspector has not received notification from the Historical Commission, the Building Inspector may issue the demolition permit. Upon determination by the Historical Commission that the building is historically and/or architecturally significant, the Building Inspector and the applicant shall be so notified by the Historical Commission in writing within thirty (30) days from the date of application submission to the Building Department, and a demolition permit shall not be issued.
- E. The Historical Commission shall hold a public hearing within thirty (30) days of the determination of significance to determine whether the building should be preferably preserved. Public notice of the time, place and purpose of the hearing shall be published by the Historical Commission at the expense of the applicant in a newspaper of general circulation in the Town or online platform of comparable reach, as approved by the Commission, not less than fourteen (14) days before the day of said hearing and shall be posted on the Town's website for the same period.
- F. The Commission shall decide at the public hearing or within fourteen (14) days after the public hearing whether the building should be preferably preserved. If agreed to in writing by the applicant, the determination of the Commission may be postponed.
- G. If after a public hearing the Historical Commission determines that the significant building should not be preferably preserved, the Historical Commission shall, within twenty-one (21) days after the hearing, notify in writing the Building Inspector and the applicant of the determination and the Building Inspector may issue a demolition permit upon receipt of the written determination.
- H. If after a public hearing the Historical Commission determines that the significant building should be preferably preserved ("preservation determination"), the Historical Commission shall, within twenty-one (21) days after the hearing, notify in writing the Building Inspector and the applicant, and no demolition permit may be issued until twenty-four (24) months after the date of the preservation determination by the Historical Commission, and the applicant has met the requirements outlined in section 125-4.
- I. Upon a determination by the Commission that a building is preferably preserved, no building permit for new construction or alterations to the subject building shall be issued for a period of twenty-four (24) months from the date of the determination unless otherwise agreed to by the Commission when required for safety, building integrity, or as part of a plan to preserve the building.
- J. Following the twenty-four (24) month delay period, no permit for demolition of a building determined to be a preferably preserved building shall be granted until all plans for future use and development of the site have been filed with the Building Inspector and have found to comply with all laws pertaining to the issuance of a building permit and any other approvals necessary for the intended use. All approvals necessary for the issuance of such building permit or certificate of occupancy including without limitation any necessary

zoning variances or special permits, must be granted and all appeals from the granting of such approvals must be concluded, prior to the issuance of a demolition permit under this section.

- K. If the site is proposed to be vacant, the property owner must file a signed affidavit with the Building Inspector attesting that no development is planned for the site and that it will remain in a vacant state for the foreseeable future. No permit for any type of construction may be granted for the property in question under this subsection for an additional period of twenty-four (24) months following the expiration of the demolition delay, unless an exemption is granted by the Historical Commission when part of a plan to construct a comparable replacement to the demolished building
- L. Notwithstanding anything contained in Subsection G, the Building Inspector may issue a demolition permit for a building with a preservation determination at any time after receipt of written advice from the Historical Commission to the effect that either:
 - (1) The Historical Commission is satisfied that there is no reasonable likelihood that either the owner or some other person or group is willing to purchase, preserve, rehabilitate or restore such building; or
 - (2) The Historical Commission is satisfied that for at least twenty-four (24) months the applicant has made continuing, bona fide and reasonable efforts to locate a purchaser to preserve, rehabilitate or restore the subject building, and that such efforts have been unsuccessful.

§ 125-4. Responsibility of owners.

- A. Once a significant building is given a determination of significance by the Historical Commission, the applicant and owner shall be responsible for properly securing the building to the satisfaction of the Building Inspector, whether occupied or vacant. Should the applicant fail to so secure the building and the significant building is destroyed at any time during the twenty-four (24) month demolition delay period and such destruction could have been prevented by the required security measures as determined by the Building Inspector, it shall be considered a demolition in violation of this chapter.
- B. Also, the applicant shall allow the Historical Commission or a designee appointed by the Historical Commission access to the significant building and property, for the purpose of documenting the building under the survey process of the Massachusetts Historical Commission and for the purpose of showing the building to prospective purchasers or preservers.
- C. During the entire twenty-four (24) month demolition delay period, the property owner shall make a good faith effort to sell the property in order to preserve the building, unless granted an exemption by vote of the Historical Commission where the owner has demonstrated that such efforts will be futile. "Good faith efforts" shall include the following:
 - (1) The significant building must be sold along with the land on which it currently sits to maintain its historic context. For the avoidance of doubt this requirement cannot be satisfied by the owner offering the building to be moved to another location, unless such relocation is approved by the Historical Commission. The amount of land to be sold with the significant building shall be governed by all applicable zoning regulations. If legally permitted, this may include the subdivision of the property. Any related expenses will be borne by the applicant.
 - (2) The property in question must be publicly advertised for sale. This includes the conspicuous posting of such notice on the property, as well as in at least one (1) other suitable public outlet typically utilized by persons offering real estate for sale (including, but not limited to, the Multiple Listing Service). This shall be done at the owner's sole expense. The twenty-four (24) month demolition delay period shall not begin until the provisions of this section are met and the applicant informs the Commission of such. If at any time during the demolition delay period the applicant ceases to meet the provisions of this section, the delay period may be paused until the provisions are once again met. The Commission will notify the applicant of any such pause, and the reason for the same.
 - (3) The offer for sale must be constructed in a bona fide and commercially reasonable manner. The object of this provision is limited to preventing the owner from impeding the preservation of the property by offering the property for sale other than on commercially reasonable terms.
 - (4) If the owner declines an offer to purchase the property in question and does not accept another offer within two (2) weeks, the applicant must inform the Commission, in writing, of the offer

price and the reason that the offer was declined. The owner shall document such good faith efforts and provide reports to the Commission, at least once every two (2) months during the delay period, of such good faith efforts.

§ 125-5. Emergency demolition.

- A. Notwithstanding the other provisions of this chapter, the Building Inspector may issue a demolition permit at any time in the event of imminent and substantial danger to the health and safety of the public due to deteriorating conditions. Prior to doing so, the Building Inspector shall inspect the building and document, in writing, the findings and reasons requiring an emergency demolition, a copy of which shall be forwarded immediately to the Historical Commission. Before allowing emergency demolition, the Building Inspector shall make every effort to inform the Chairperson of the Commission of his intention to allow demolition.
- B. No provision of this chapter is intended to conflict with or abridge any obligations or rights conferred by Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 143, regarding removal or demolition of dangerous or abandoned structures. In the event of a conflict, the applicable provisions of Chapter 143 shall control.

§ 125-6. Enforcement and remedies.

- A. The Historical Commission is authorized to adopt rules and regulations to carry out its duties and functions under this chapter
- B. The Historical Commission is specifically authorized to institute any and all actions and proceedings, in law or equity, as it may deem necessary and appropriate to obtain compliance with the requirements of this chapter or to prevent a threatened violation thereof.
- C. No building permit for any premises upon which a significant building has been voluntarily demolished in violation of this chapter shall be issued for a period of two years after the date of the completion of such demolition. The design shall first be reviewed, and must be accepted by, the Historical Commission. As used herein, "premises" refers to the parcel of land upon which the demolished significant building was located and all adjoining parcels of land under common ownership or control.
- D. Notwithstanding the foregoing, whenever the Historical Commission shall, on its own initiative or on application of the applicant, determine that earlier reconstruction, restoration or other remediation of any demolition in violation of this chapter better serves the intent and purpose of this chapter, it may, prior to the expiration of said period of two years, authorize issuance of a building permit, upon such conditions as the Historical Commission deems necessary or appropriate to effectuate the purposes of this chapter, and may so notify the Building Inspector.
- E. If the property owner fails to abide by the terms of section 125-4, the Historical Commission may pause the demolition delay period until the provisions are met.
- F. The Commission is authorized to adopt a schedule of reasonable fees to cover the costs associated with the administration of this bylaw.
- G. Any owner of a building subject to this bylaw that demolished the building without first obtaining a demolition permit in accordance with the provisions of this bylaw shall be subject to a fine of not more than Three Hundred Dollars (\$300). Each day the violation exists shall constitute a separate offense until a faithful recreation of the demolished building is completed or unless otherwise agreed to by the Commission.

§ 125-7. Historic District Act.

Nothing in this chapter shall be deemed to conflict with the provisions of the Historic Districts Act, Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40C. If any of the provisions of this chapter do so conflict, that act shall prevail. Following a determination that the building is significant and preferably preserved, the Commission may recommend to town meeting that the building be protected through the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40C, the Historic Districts Act. The steps required under M.G.L. Chapter 40C shall be followed prior to the establishment of a local historic district. Buildings included within the boundaries of a local historic district established under M.G.L. Chapter 40C shall not be subject to this bylaw so long as the proposed demolition is regulated by the local historic district bylaw.

§ 125-8. Severability.

In case any section, paragraph or part of this chapter is for any reason declared invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, every other section, paragraph and part shall continue in full force and effect.

or to take any other action relative thereto.

Historical Commission

Select Board: No Recommendation (4 Deferred Until Town Meeting, 1 Against – Manugian)

Finance Committee: No Position

Summary: *The Groton Historical Commission is proposing a set of revisions to increase the effectiveness of the Town’s Demolition Delay Bylaw, which provides the only formal protections for historic structures in Groton located outside of the Town’s Historic Districts. The revisions are intended to clarify the process and align it with best practices adopted by other municipalities and those recommended by the Massachusetts Historical Commission. Key changes include extending the maximum length of the delay from 18 to 24 months; defining the tools available to the Groton Historical Commission to regulate the process; and clarifying the responsibilities of property owners regarding the (previously existing) requirement to offer the historical structure in question for sale to a party interested in preserving it during the term of the demolition delay.*

Article 13: Adopt Resolution – Reduce Statewide Greenhouse Gas Emissions

To see if the Town will vote to adopt the following resolution in support of reducing Statewide Greenhouse Gas Emissions: *“Groton affirms its support for the goal established by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to reduce statewide greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero by 2050. Groton commits to evaluate and implement strategies to reduce emissions in municipal activities with a goal of eliminating all onsite burning of fossil fuels in municipal buildings and vehicles by 2050 and support residents and businesses in reducing emissions.”*

or to take any other action relative thereto.

Select Board

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously

Finance Committee: No Position

Summary: *The Climate Action Working Group was a multi-stakeholder group formed by the Town Manager to assess attitudes towards climate action in the Town. The Working Group convened over a five-month period in 2024, meeting with fourteen community stakeholder groups and Town departments, and surveying over 300 residents. The group discovered strong support for local climate action from residents, the business community and town departments, including support for the Massachusetts mandate for statewide greenhouse gas emissions to reach net zero by 2050. This resolution is intended to formally declare the town’s support for the state mandate, to continue municipal efforts to reduce emissions from municipal operations and to assist residents and businesses in reducing their emissions. Municipal activities are taxpayer funded activities. In addition, passing this resolution is a mandatory step in the process of becoming a Climate Leader community, a state designation that provides increased funding assistance for municipal projects aimed at reducing emissions through energy efficiency, electrification and clean energy, all of which can also reduce municipal operating costs.*

Article 14: Amend Floodplain Overlay District

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Bylaw of the Town of Groton as follows:

- 1. Delete Section 218-7.1 Floodplain District Regulations** in its entirety.
- 2. Insert the following new Section 218-7.1 Floodplain Overlay District.**

Section 218-7.1 Floodplain Overlay District

- A. The purpose of the Floodplain Overlay District and this Floodplain Bylaw is to:
- 1) Ensure public safety through reducing the threats to life and personal injury
 - 2) Eliminate new hazards to emergency response officials
 - 3) Prevent the occurrence of public emergencies resulting from water quality, contamination, and pollution due to flooding
 - 4) Avoid the loss of utility services which if damaged by flooding would disrupt or shut down the utility network and impact regions of the community beyond the site of flooding
 - 5) Eliminate costs associated with the response and cleanup of flooding conditions
 - 6) Reduce damage to public and private property resulting from flooding waters
- B. The Floodplain Overlay District is established as an overlay district. The Floodplain Overlay District includes all special flood hazard areas within the Town of Groton designated as Zone A, AE on the Middlesex County Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) dated July 8, 2025 issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the administration of the National Flood Insurance Program. The exact boundaries of the Floodplain Overlay District shall be defined by the 1%-chance base flood elevations shown on the FIRM and further defined by the Middlesex County Flood Insurance Study (FIS) report dated July 8, 2025. The FIRM and FIS report are incorporated herein by reference and are on file with the Town Clerk, Planning Board, Building Commissioner, and Conservation Commission.
- C. The Building Commissioner shall be the official floodplain administrator for the Town and floodplain permit granting authority under this Floodplain Bylaw.
- D. No new building or structure shall be erected in the Floodplain Overlay District except in accordance with this Section 218-7.1.
- E. The Town of Groton requires a floodplain permit issued by the Building Commissioner for all proposed construction or other development in the Floodplain Overlay District, including new construction or changes to existing buildings, placement of manufactured homes, placement of agricultural facilities, fences, sheds, storage facilities or drilling, mining, paving and any other development that might increase flooding or adversely impact flood risks to other properties.
- F. The Town's permit review process includes the requirement that the proponent obtain all local, state and federal permits that will be necessary in order to carry out the proposed development in the Floodplain Overlay District prior to the commencement of work authorized by the Building Commissioner under this Floodplain Bylaw. The proponent must acquire all necessary permits and must demonstrate that all necessary permits have been acquired.
- G. In Zones A and AE, along watercourses that have not had a regulatory floodway designated, the best available Federal, State, local, or other floodway data shall be used to prohibit encroachments in floodways which would result in any increase in flood levels within the community during the occurrence of the base flood discharge.

In Zone AE, along watercourses that have a regulatory floodway designated on the Town's FIRM encroachments are prohibited, including fill, new construction, substantial improvements, and other development within the adopted regulatory floodway unless it has been demonstrated through hydrologic and hydraulic analyses performed in accordance with standard engineering practice that the proposed encroachment would not result in any increase in flood levels within the community during the occurrence of the base flood discharge.

H. In A Zones, in the absence of FEMA BFE data and floodway data, the building department will obtain, review and reasonably utilize base flood elevation and floodway data available from a Federal, State, or other source as criteria for requiring new construction, substantial improvements, or other development in Zone A and as the basis for elevating residential structures to or above base flood level, for floodproofing or elevating nonresidential structures to or above base flood level, and for prohibiting encroachments in floodways.

I. All subdivision proposals and development proposals in the Floodplain Overlay District shall be reviewed to assure that:

- (a) Such proposals minimize flood damage.
- (b) Public utilities and facilities are located & constructed so as to minimize flood damage.
- (c) Adequate drainage is provided.

J. When proposing subdivisions or other developments greater than 50 lots or 5 acres (whichever is less), the proponent must provide technical data to determine base flood elevations for each developable parcel shown on the design plans.

K. In A and AE Zones, all recreational vehicles to be placed on a site must be elevated and anchored in accordance with the zone's regulations for foundation and elevation requirements or be on the site for less than 180 consecutive days or be fully licensed and highway ready.

L. In a riverine situation, the Building Commissioner shall notify the following of any alteration or relocation of a watercourse:

- Adjacent Communities, especially upstream and downstream
- Bordering States, if affected
- NFIP State Coordinator Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
- NFIP Program Specialist Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region I

M. If the Town acquires data that changes the base flood elevation in the FEMA mapped Special Flood Hazard Areas, the Town will, within 6 months, notify FEMA of these changes by submitting the technical or scientific data that supports the change(s.) Notification shall be submitted to:

- NFIP State Coordinator
Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
- NFIP Program Specialist
Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region I

N. Variances to building code floodplain standards. The Town will request from the State Building Code Appeals Board a written and/or audible copy of the portion of the hearing related to the variance and will maintain this record in the community's files. The Town shall also issue a letter to the property owner regarding potential impacts to the annual premiums for the flood insurance policy covering that property, in writing over the signature of a community official that (i) the issuance of a variance to construct a structure below the base flood level will result in increased premium rates for flood insurance up to amounts as high as \$25 for \$100 of insurance coverage and (ii) such construction below the base flood level increases risks to life and property. Such notification shall be maintained with the record of all variance actions for the referenced development in the Floodplain Overlay District.

O. Variances to local Zoning Bylaws related to community compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). A variance from this Floodplain Bylaw must meet the requirements set out by State law, as applicable, and may only be granted if: 1) Good and sufficient cause and exceptional non-financial hardship exist; 2) the variance will not result in additional threats to public safety, extraordinary public expense, or fraud or victimization of the public; and 3) the variance is the minimum action necessary to afford relief. A variance under this Floodplain Bylaw shall be distinct from a variance under M.G.L. c. 40A, Section 10 and Section 218-2.4 of the Zoning Bylaw.

P. The floodplain management regulations found in this Floodplain Overlay District section shall take precedence over any less restrictive conflicting local laws, ordinances or codes.

Q. The degree of flood protection required by this Floodplain Bylaw is considered reasonable but does not imply total flood protection.

R. If any section, provision, or portion of this Floodplain Bylaw is deemed to be unconstitutional or invalid by a court, the remainder of the ordinance shall be effective.

S. Definitions not found in the State Building Code, which are applicable only within this Floodplain Bylaw and do not govern other sections of the Zoning Bylaw.

DEVELOPMENT means any man-made change to improved or unimproved real estate, including but not limited to building or other structures, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavation or drilling operations or storage of equipment or materials. [US Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Part 59]

FLOODWAY. The channel of the river, creek or other watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than a designated height. [Base Code, Chapter 2, Section 202]

FUNCTIONALLY DEPENDENT USE means a use which cannot perform its intended purpose unless it is located or carried out in close proximity to water. The term includes only docking facilities, port facilities that are necessary for the loading and unloading of cargo or passengers, and ship building and ship repair facilities, but does not include long-term storage or related manufacturing facilities. [US Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Part 59] Also [Referenced Standard ASCE 24-14]

HIGHEST ADJACENT GRADE means the highest natural elevation of the ground surface prior to construction next to the proposed walls of a structure. [US Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Part 59]

HISTORIC STRUCTURE means any structure that is:

- (a) Listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places (a listing maintained by the Department of Interior) or preliminarily determined by the Secretary of the Interior as meeting the requirements for individual listing on the National Register;
- (b) Certified or preliminarily determined by the Secretary of the Interior as contributing to the historical significance of a registered historic district or a district preliminarily determined by the Secretary to qualify as a registered historic district;
- (c) Individually listed on a state inventory of historic places in states with historic preservation programs which have been approved by the Secretary of the Interior; or
- (d) Individually listed on a local inventory of historic places in communities with historic preservation programs that have been certified either:

(1) By an approved state program as determined by the Secretary of the Interior or

(2) Directly by the Secretary of the Interior in states without approved programs.

[US Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Part 59]

NEW CONSTRUCTION. Structures for which the start of construction commenced on or after the effective date of the first floodplain management code, regulation, ordinance, or standard adopted by the authority having jurisdiction, including any subsequent improvements to such structures. *New construction includes work determined to be substantial improvement.* [Referenced Standard ASCE 24-14]

RECREATIONAL VEHICLE means a vehicle which is:

- (a) Built on a single chassis;
- (b) 400 square feet or less when measured at the largest horizontal projection;
- (c) Designed to be self-propelled or permanently towable by a light duty truck; and
- (d) Designed primarily not for use as a permanent dwelling but as temporary living quarters for recreational, camping, travel, or seasonal use. [US Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Part 59]

REGULATORY FLOODWAY - see FLOODWAY.

SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREA. The land area subject to flood hazards and shown on a Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard map as Zone A, AE, A1-30, A99, AR, AO, AH. [Base Code, Chapter 2, Section 202]

START OF CONSTRUCTION. The date of issuance for new construction and substantial improvements to existing structures, provided the actual start of construction, repair, reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition, placement or other improvement is within 180 days after the date of issuance. The actual start of construction means the first placement of permanent construction of a building (including a manufactured home) on a site, such as the pouring of a slab or footings, installation of pilings or construction of columns. Permanent construction does not include land preparation (such as clearing, excavation, grading or filling), the installation of streets or walkways, excavation for a basement, footings, piers or foundations, the erection of temporary forms or the installation of accessory buildings such as garages or sheds not occupied as dwelling units or not part of the main building. For a substantial improvement, the actual “start of construction” means the first alteration of any wall, ceiling, floor or other structural part of a building, whether or not that alteration affects the external dimensions of the building. [Base Code, Chapter 2, Section 202]

STRUCTURE means, for floodplain management purposes, a walled and roofed building, including a gas or liquid storage tank, that is principally above ground, as well as a manufactured home. [US Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Part 59]

SUBSTANTIAL REPAIR OF A FOUNDATION. When work to repair or replace a foundation results in the repair or replacement of a portion of the foundation with a perimeter along the base of the foundation that equals or exceeds 50% of the perimeter of the base of the foundation measured in linear feet, or repair or replacement of 50% of the piles, columns or piers of a pile, column or pier supported foundation, the building official shall determine it to be substantial repair of a foundation. Applications determined by the building official to constitute substantial repair of a foundation shall require all existing portions of the entire building or structure to meet the requirements of 780 CMR. [As amended by MA in 9th Edition BC]

VARIANCE means a grant of relief by a community from the terms of a flood plain management regulation. [US Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Part 59]

VIOLATION means the failure of a structure or other development to be fully compliant with the community's flood plain management regulations. A structure or other development without the elevation certificate, other certifications, or other evidence of compliance required in §60.3 is presumed to be in violation until such time as that documentation is provided. [US Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Part 59]

or to take any other action relative thereto.

Planning Board

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*

Finance Committee: *No Position*

Planning Board: *Recommended Unanimously*

Summary: *This article amends the existing floodplain regulations in the zoning bylaw to comply with the requirements of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The amendments required by FEMA include updating the references to the new Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) for Groton and incorporating the applicable provisions of the Massachusetts Model Floodplain Bylaw. The new FIRM for Groton will become effective on July 8, 2025.*

Article 15: Endorse Comprehensive Master Plan

To see if the Town will vote to endorse the “Groton Master Plan” dated February, 2025, filed in the Office of the Town Clerk on February 28, 2025, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Planning Board

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously

Finance Committee: No Position

Planning Board: Recommended Unanimously

Summary: *The Planning Board will present the Master Plan to Town Meeting for its endorsement. Copies of the plan are available in the Planning Board office in the Town Hall, at the Groton Public Library and on the Town’s web site: www.grotonma.gov*

Article 16: MBTA Communities Multi-Family Overlay District (MCMOD)

To see if the Town will vote to amend Chapter 218 Zoning Bylaws of the Town of Groton as follows:

Amend Section 218-3 Definitions by Deleting the definition for “Multifamily Use” in its entirety,

Amend Section 218-3 Definitions by inserting the following definition in alphabetical order.

AFFORDABLE UNIT.

A dwelling unit that is subject to a use restriction recorded in its chain of title limiting the sale price or rent or limiting occupancy to an individual or household of a specified income, or both.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Any combination of Affordable Units restricted in perpetuity to persons of families qualifying as low or moderate income under the guidelines of EOHLC earning less than 50% of median income for low income and less than 80% of median income for moderate income.

AS OF RIGHT.

Development that may proceed under the Zoning Bylaw without the need for a special permit, variance, zoning amendment, waiver, or other discretionary zoning approval. Also known as “by right” development.

MBTA COMMUNITIES MULTI FAMILY OVERLAY DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT (MCMODD).

Multi-family use that is located in the Multi-Family Development Overlay District (MCMOD) in accordance with the provisions of Section 218-7.5 MBTA Communities Multi Family Development Overlay District.

MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT.

Development containing a mix of residential uses and non-residential uses, including commercial, institutional, industrial, or other uses.

MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING

A building with three or more residential dwelling units or two or more buildings on the same lot with more than one residential dwelling unit in each building. Also known as “multifamily use.”

Amend Section 218-4 Zoning Districts as follows:

Insert under subsection 218-4.1 E, Overlay Districts the following:

“(6) MBTA Communities Multi-Family Overlay District (MCMOD)”

Insert under subsection 218-4.2 Intention of Districts the following sub sections:

“J. MCMOD – MBTA Communities Multi-Family Overlay District is intended to provide for higher density residential development at locations in proximity to infrastructure, services, and nexuses of activity, amenities, and development.

Insert a new Section 218-7.5 Multi Family Development Overlay District to read as follows:

218-7.5 – MBTA COMMUNITIES MULTI-FAMILY OVERLAY DISTRICT (MCMOD)

A. Purpose

- To transition from a case by case permitting process for Multi-Family Development and establish a transparent and predictable process for the permitting of MBTA Communities Multi-Family Overlay District Development (MCMODD) in designated locations with specific guidelines and criteria.
- To encourage MCMODD in sensible locations in terms of services, infrastructure, transportation access, economic opportunity, and compatibility with surrounding uses.
- To accommodate compatible uses that serve residents and the general public.
- To increase housing choice and diversity and address the local and regional need for additional housing
- Preserve open space in a community by locating new housing within or adjacent to existing developed areas and infrastructure.
-

B. Applicability.

This MCMOD is an overlay district that is superimposed over the underlying zoning district (s) and is shown on the Zoning Map. Within the boundaries of the MCMOD, all of the uses permitted in the underlying District(s) in which the subject land is located are permitted, subject to the same use and development regulations as may otherwise apply thereto and shall remain in full force. Alternatively, one or more of the uses set forth in Section 218-7.5.C shall be permitted as part of a MCMODD in accordance with this Section 218-7.5 subject to Site Plan Review by the Planning Board in accordance with Section 218-2.5.

C. Permitted Uses

1. As of Right Uses

Any or combination of multi-family residential uses are permitted as of right including but not limited to the following uses

- a. Duplex attached units
- b. Townhouses
- c. Garden Flats
- d. Uses exempt by statute (MGL c.40A §3)
- e. Mixed-Use Development
 - i. Non-residential uses allowed as-of-right in the underlying zoning district located on the ground floor of a mixed-use building
 - ii. Multi-family use allowed on any floor of a mixed-use building

2. Accessory Uses

The following uses are considered accessory to any of the permitted uses in Section D.1 and allowed as of right:

- a. Parking, including surface parking and parking within a structure such as an above ground or underground parking garage or other building on the same lot as the principal use.
- b. Home occupation employing only household members and no on-site clients.
- c. Accessory Dwelling Unit.

D. Development Standards.

1. The minimum lot area for a MCMODD shall be 10,000 square feet and may be comprised by one or more contiguous parcels.
2. The minimum Lot Frontage shall be 75 feet.
3. No building or structure within a MCMODD shall be less than 15 feet from the exterior lot line.
4. Lot coverage of a MCMODD by buildings and other impervious surface shall not exceed 75% of the lot area, unless the applicant provides sufficient justification for a waiver and the Planning Board determines, as part of Site Plan Review that a greater lot coverage will not adversely affect adjacent properties.
5. No structure shall exceed four (4) stories, fifty-five (55) feet in height, measured in accordance with the Building Height standards set forth in Section 218-3.
6. No structure or group of structures, except one-story garages or carports, shall be nearer to each other than twenty (20) feet. Carports or garages, if not directly attached, shall be at least ten (10) feet from the main buildings.
7. The maximum permitted density shall not exceed 15 (fifteen) dwelling units per acre.
8. A MCMODD shall conform with the provisions of Section 218-8.2. Off-Street Parking and Loading. Parking areas shall otherwise comply with the provisions of Section 218-8.2 unless the applicant provides sufficient justification for a waiver and the Planning Board determines, as part of Site Plan Review, that the grant of such waiver will not adversely affect the neighborhood.
9. All dwelling units in a Multi-Family Development shall be without age restrictions and shall be suitable for families with children.
10. Sewage shall be disposed of by means of adequate connections to the municipal sewer system or a system Approved by the Board of Health pursuant to Title 5.

E. Design Standards

To the maximum extent feasible, projects shall comply with the following design standards:

1. Site Design, Open Space and Landscaping
 - a. Projects shall be sited to maximize opportunities for creating usable, attractive, well-integrated Open Space.
 - b. Acceptable activities within the minimum required Open Space include natural areas (including wetlands and surface waters), wildlife and native plant habitat, landscape plantings, agricultural activities, low-impact design stormwater management, non-motorized trails, and other low-impact activities. Open Space shall not contain habitable structures.
 - c. Open Space shall be planned as a single contiguous area and, to the extent practicable, configured contiguously with any abutting conservation open areas.
 - d. Open Space intended for public use shall have direct access from one or more streets, pedestrian paths, sidewalks, and/or other public access.
 - e. Landscape design shall strive to provide greenery so that streets and access drives are lined with shade trees, large, paved areas are visually divided and screened, and buffers are provided within and around the Project.
 - f. Landscaped areas shall be planted with drought-tolerant species which do not require any automatic irrigation systems.
 - g. Plantings shall include species that are native or adapted to the region. Plants on the Massachusetts Prohibited Plant List and Invasive Plant List, as may be amended, shall be prohibited.
 - h. Lighting shall comply with Dark Sky standards and provide illumination necessary for safety and convenience while preventing glare and overspill to adjoining properties and reducing the amount of skyglow. The color temperature of exterior lighting shall not exceed 3000 Kelvin.

Parking and circulation on the site shall be organized to reduce the amount of impervious surface.

2. Building Siting

- a. There shall be a landscaped buffer between buildings or structures and properties adjacent to the MCMOD;
- b. Buildings shall be oriented to any adjacent usable open space, with access to the building onto or accessible to the usable open space;
- c. Structures shall be oriented to provide pedestrian entrances to any adjoining sidewalks
- d. Trash collection and dumpsters shall be located in appropriate areas and screened to avoid adverse impacts on properties adjacent to the MCMOD
- e. Project shall minimize the visual impact of the development from the street by locating lower buildings closest to the street frontage and taller buildings in the interior of the parcels.

3. Building Design Features

- a. Architecture shall demonstrate the cohesive planning of the development and present a clearly identifiable design feature throughout. It is not intended that buildings be totally uniform in appearance or that designers and developers be restricted in their creativity. The following standards shall apply:
- b. To reduce a building's perceived mass, building facades shall be divided into smaller scale horizontal and vertical components, through use of changes in plane and changes in color, material, and texture.
- c. For multi-family buildings of three or more stories, building design shall maintain a distinction between upper and lower floors. Primary building entrances shall be accentuated. Design features can include covered porches, porticos, and other pronounced architectural forms.
- d. Buildings with pitched roofs shall have a pitch between 5:12 and 12:12.
- e. Side and rear facades shall be generally consistent with the primary facade's architectural style.
- f. Accessory buildings shall be in the same style as the primary building(s).
- g. Mechanical equipment at grade, attached to, or on the rooftops shall be screened from view or made an integral part of the overall design of the building.
- h. All utility, service, loading, and trash collection areas shall be screened or enclosed by plantings, walls, or solid fencing, or a combination thereof. Enclosures shall be designed to be compatible with the architecture of the adjacent building.
- i. Materials such as brick, stone, wood clapboard, and cementitious siding such as Hardi-plank shall be used for siding, particularly where visible at the pedestrian level.
- j. Architectural asphalt shingles are preferred for buildings with pitched roofs.

4. Circulation and Walkability

- a. Development shall be made pedestrian-friendly by use of amenities such as wide sidewalks/pathways, outdoor seating, and/or appropriate landscaping. Structures, parking, pathways and other pedestrian amenities shall be accessible by people with disabilities and designed to maximize ease of pedestrian access. Bicycle features shall include bike racks and be designed to provide pathways connecting to any existing and proposed bicycle routes.
- b. A paved pedestrian network shall connect parking to the entries to all buildings and the buildings to each other.

G. Affordable Component

MCMODDs shall provide affordable units as follows:

- 1. 10 (ten) percent of the units in an MCMODD shall be affordable units.

2. Affordable Units shall be dispersed throughout the project. The Affordable Units shall be indistinguishable in external appearance from any market-rate housing units in the MCMODD.
3. In computing this requirement, the total number of dwelling units shall be used.

4. Amend Section 218-2.5 Site Plan Review By inserting a new subsection (e) under Section 218-2.5.C.(2) Threshold of Review Major Project to read as follows:

“(e) MCMODD pursuant to Section 218-7.5”

5. Amend Section 218-6.2 Schedule of Intensity Regulations Notes #1. By adding the following at the end of the note:

“For MBTA Communities Multi-Family Overlay District Development see **Section 218-7.5**”

6. Amend the Groton Zoning Bylaw by deleting the words “ Department of Housing and Community Development” and “DHCD” wherever they appear and inserting the following words in their place respectively, “Executive Office of Housing and Liveable Communities” and “EOHLC”

7. Amend the Zoning Map of Groton by establishing the Multi Family Development Overlay District (MCMOD).

The zoning map of the Town of Groton is hereby amended by designating the following properties to be included in the Multi Family Development Overlay District:

Assessors Map Address & Parcel	Area	Owner	
216-94	Main Street	2.04 acres	500MG LLC
216-95	Main Street	25.42 acres	500MG LLC
216-96	Main Street	9.32acres	500MG LLC
216-98	Main Street	1.2 acres	Quality Green Homes LLC
216-99	Main Street	3.36 acres	Quality Green Homes LLC
216-99.1	Main Street	0.94 acres	Quality Green Homes LLC
216-01	489-497 Main Street	5.72 acres	Various (commercial condos)
110-29	Main Street	0.957 acres	445 Main Street Realty LLC

or to take any other action relative thereto.

Planning Board

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*

Finance Committee: *No Position*

Planning Board: *Recommendation Deferred Until Town Meeting*

Summary: *This article proposes to create a zoning overlay district in which multi-family developments may be allowed “as of right” at a maximum density of 15 units per acre. The parcels on Main Street identified for inclusion in the overlay district are zoned General Business (GB) and are located within the sewer district. The existing zoning of the parcels included in the overlay district will remain unchanged. The purpose of this article is to implement zoning reform as required by M.G.L. Ch. 40A, Section 3A, a.k.a. the MBTA Communities Zoning Law (the “Law”). The Law was enacted to address the acute need for housing in Massachusetts. The Law requires MBTA Communities, including Groton, to adopt local zoning that provides at least one zoning district of reasonable size in which multi-family housing is allowed “as of right” at a minimum gross density of 15 units per acre.*

Article 17: Accessory Dwelling Units

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Bylaw of the Town of Groton as follows:

1. **Amend Section 218-5.2 Schedule of Use Regulations** by amending the entry under Accessory Uses “Accessory Apartment as regulated under Section 218-9.4” by deleting the “N” use entries under the “NB, VCB, and GB” columns and inserting “Y” in their place and by deleting the “N” use entries under the R-A, R-B, NB, VCB, and GB columns so it reads as follows:

	R-A	R-B	NB	VCB	GB	I	P	O
Accessory Dwelling Unit	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N
More than One Accessory Dwelling Unit	PB	PB	PB	PB	PB	N	N	N

2. **Amend Section 218-9.4.1 Purpose**, by deleting the words “in the RA and RB Districts” in subsection a., so it reads as follows:

“a. To provide homeowners of a single-family dwelling with a means of sharing space and the burdens of home ownership, companionship, security, and services, thereby enabling them to stay more comfortably in homes and neighborhoods they might otherwise be forced to leave.”

3. **Amend Section 218-9.4.2 Attached accessory dwelling unit** in the second paragraph by deleting the words “RA and RB” and replacing them with the words “RA, RB, NB, VCB, and GB”, so it reads as follows:

“No more than one accessory dwelling unit shall be allowed as of right on a lot in the RA, RB, NB, VCB, and GB Districts providing the following criteria are met:”

4. **Amend Section 218-9.4.3 Detached accessory dwelling unit** in the first paragraph by deleting the words “R-A or R-B Districts subject to Site Plan Review” and inserting in their place the following words “R-A, R-B, NB, VCB, and GB Districts subject to Minor Site Plan Review” so it reads as follows:

“A Building Permit for the installation and use and rental of a detached accessory dwelling unit not to exceed 900 square feet of habitable floor area or 50% of the gross habitable floor area contained within the principal dwelling unit, whichever is less in a detached structure on a lot in the R-A, R-B, NB, VCB, and GB Districts shall be subject to Minor Site Plan Review pursuant to § 218-2.5 provided the following criteria are met:”

5. **Amend Section 218-9-.4.3.g.** by deleting the first paragraph in its entirety and insert the following in its place, “The approval for Minor Site Plan review for a Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit shall include the following findings:”

6. **Amend Section 218-9-.4. Purpose, subsections b., c., d., and e.,** by adding the word “To” to the beginning of each subsection in order to be grammatically correct,

or take any action relative thereto.

Planning Board

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously

Finance Committee: No Position

Planning Board: Recommended Unanimously

Summary: *The purpose of this article is to make additional amendments to the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) provisions of the zoning bylaw to be fully consistent with the ADU regulations of the Affordable Homes Act. These additional amendments were recommended by the Attorney General’s Office and Groton’s Town Counsel.*

Article 18: Accept Monarch Path as a Town Way

To see if the Town will vote to accept Monarch Path as a public way, as recommended by the Planning Board and laid out by the Select Board and as shown on a plan entitled “Right-of-Way As-Built of Monarch Path, Groton, Massachusetts, Owned by Ebrahim Masalehdan”, prepared by TFM Civil Engineers, Bedford, NH for Ebrahim Masalehdan, dated May 2, 2022, and on file with the Town Clerk; to authorize the Select Board to acquire, by gift, purchase or eminent domain such land and easements for the creation, maintenance and operation of a public way, including but not limited to easements for access, grading, drainage, sloping, construction and utilities, in all or any portions of such way and the parcels on such way, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Select Board

Select Board: Recommendation Deferred Until Town Meeting
Finance Committee: No Position

Summary: To accept Monarch Path as a public way.

ARTICLES 19 THROUGH 28 WILL BE PART OF THE CONSENT AGENDA. PLEASE SEE EXPLANATION PROVIDED ON PAGE 2 OF THIS WARRANT.

Article 19: Funding for the Destination Groton Committee

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 in Fiscal Year 2026 and thereafter, for the purpose of providing funding for the Destination Groton Committee to carry out the Charge of the Committee, and all costs associated and related thereto, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Destination Groton Committee

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Summary: The purpose of this Article is to provide \$15,000 in funding for the Destination Groton Committee to carry out its charge, which is to pursue a course of action intended to engage all Town stakeholders, including the business and non-profit communities, Town leaders, Federal and State elected officials and Town residents in a series of public information forums, economic research and data analysis, in order to, through a ten-year Town Center Strategic Vision Plan, prepare for an increase in visitors to town while at the same time work to preserve its rural small-town charm. The purpose of this request is to meet a state required minimum local Town expenditure of \$15,000 in a prior fiscal year in order to qualify for major matching grants in Destination Development, Historic Preservation, Infrastructure, and Cultural programs that promote Groton to meet the needs of increased visitors. A portion of this funding will be used to set aside local match opportunities and to produce a Groton Public Engagement Vision Forum and the second Regional Tourism Conference to promote Groton as a gateway for the region.

Article 20: *Transfer within the Water Enterprise Fund*

To see if the Town will vote to transfer a sum or sums of money from the Water Enterprise Fund Surplus to the Fiscal Year 2025 Water Department Operating Budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Board of Water Commissioners

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*
Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Summary: *This article allows the Water Department to transfer money from its surplus account to cover any deficit in the Fiscal Year 2025 Water Department Budget. As of the printing of the Warrant, it is anticipated that \$75,000 will need to be transferred for this purpose.*

Article 21: *Transfer Within the Center Sewer Enterprise Fund*

To see if the Town will vote to transfer a sum or sums of money from the Center Sewer Enterprise Fund Surplus to the Fiscal Year 2025 Center Sewer Enterprise Department Budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Board of Sewer Commissioners

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*
Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Summary: *This article allows the Sewer Department to transfer money from its surplus account to cover any deficit in the Fiscal Year 2025 Center Sewer Budget. As of the printing of the Warrant, it is anticipated that \$25,000 will need to be transferred for this purpose.*

Article 22: *Transfer Within the Four Corners Sewer Enterprise Fund*

To see if the Town will vote to transfer a sum or sums of money from the Four Corners Sewer Enterprise Fund Surplus to the Fiscal Year 2025 Four Corners Sewer Enterprise Department Budget, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Board of Sewer Commissioners

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*
Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Summary: *This article allows the Sewer Department to transfer money from its surplus account to cover any deficit in the Fiscal Year 2025 Four Corners Sewer Budget. As of the printing of the Warrant, it is anticipated that \$20,000 will need to be transferred for this purpose.*

Article 23: Prior Year Bills

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds a sum or sums of money for the payment of unpaid bills from prior fiscal years, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Select Board

Select Board: Recommendation Deferred Until Town Meeting

Finance Committee: Recommendation Deferred Until Town Meeting

Summary: Town Meeting approval is required to pay bills from a prior fiscal year. A list of unpaid bills will be provided at Town Meeting.

Article 24: Appropriate Money to Offset the Snow and Ice Deficit

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, and/or borrow a sum or sums of money, to be expended by the Town Manager, to reduce the deficit in the Fiscal Year 2025 Snow and Ice Budget, as approved under Article 5 of the May 18, 2024 Special Town Meeting, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously

Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Summary: This article will allow the Town to fund any deficit in the Snow and Ice Account in FY 25. The current deficit is projected to be approximately \$170,000.

Article 25: Debt Service for Middle School Track

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds, a sum or sums of money, pursuant to Chapter 44B, Section 5, of the Massachusetts General Laws, for 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, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Community Preservation Committee

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously

Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Summary: This Article appropriates the debt service payment for the Middle School Track Project. Article 7 of the May 21, 2021 Spring Town Meeting appropriated \$1,405,374 for the project. In FY 2026, the Community Preservation Committee will pay \$202,467 in debt service (\$169,702 in principal payment and \$32,765 in interest payment) for this appropriation. To fund this appropriation the entire amount will come from the Unallocated Reserve.

Article 26: Transfer Bond Proceeds

To see if the Town will vote to transfer the excess bond proceeds of \$24,530.27 from the \$1,131,041 borrowing authorized under Article 8 of the April 29, 2019 Spring Town Meeting for the Library Roof, pursuant to M.G.L., c. 44, §20 to the Florence Roche Elementary School Construction Project as authorized under Article 8 of the May 1, 2021 Spring Town Meeting, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager
Assistant Director of Finance/Town Accountant

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Summary: *The purpose of this Article is to transfer the remaining funds for the Library Roof Project to the Florence Roche Elementary School Construction Project as they are no longer needed for the Library Roof and can be used to reduce the final borrowing for the Elementary School Project.*

Article 27: Establishing Limits for the Various Revolving Funds

To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c. 44 sec 53E½ and the Revolving Fund Bylaw, to amend the Revolving Fund Bylaw to add or delete any revolving account and/or to set the FY 2025 spending limits for the various revolving funds as follows:

Program or Purpose	FY 2026 Spending Limit
Stormwater Management	\$20,000
Conservation Commission	\$50,000
Building Rental Fund	\$50,000
Affordable Housing Marketing	\$20,000
Home Recycling Equipment	\$10,000
Access for Persons with Disabilities	\$10,000
Council on Aging Program Fund	\$40,000
Boat Excise Tax Fund	\$ 5,000
Transfer Station Glass	\$20,000
Senior Center Fitness Equipment	\$10,000

or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Select Board: Recommended Unanimously
Finance Committee: Recommended Unanimously

Summary: *This Article sets the limit of annual spending for the various revolving funds authorized by previous Town Meeting votes and is currently set forth in the Town’s Bylaw for said purpose.*

Article 28: *Repair Sprinkler System at Town Hall*

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 in Fiscal Year 2025 and thereafter, to pay for repairs to the Sprinkler System at Town Hall, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Town Manager

Select Board: *Recommended Unanimously*

Finance Committee: *Recommended Unanimously*

Summary: *The sprinkler system at the Town Hall is a dry system. When it is tested, water is put into the system and then removed. Unfortunately, minute amounts of water left in the piping have caused rust to develop. The original system was installed when the Town Hall was renovated in 1999. Repairs were put out to bid and the low bid came in at \$125,000. The old piping will be replaced with non-rusting galvanized piping. This Article will seek a transfer from Free Cash to pay for the repairs.*

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 7th Day of April 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

BUDGET MESSAGE FROM THE TOWN MANAGER AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

TOWN OF GROTON FISCAL YEAR 2026

Pursuant to Article 6 “Finance and Fiscal Procedure”, Section 6.4 “The Budget”, of the Charter of the Town of Groton, Massachusetts, the Finance Committee, Select Board and Town Manager are pleased to submit for your consideration the Proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Operating Budget for the Town of Groton. This budget reflects our ongoing commitment to transparency, fiscal responsibility, and the well-being of Groton. As we navigate the complexities of budgeting in this challenging time, it is important to acknowledge the reduced revenues we are currently facing. The defeat of the proposed Proposition 2½ override last year has had a significant impact on the Groton Dunstable Regional School District which limited their ability to fund essential services and programs to continue to provide the quality education Groton’s children deserve. This situation requires the Town to be more strategic and innovative in its approach to budgeting, ensuring that the Town prioritizes the needs of Groton while remaining within its financial constraints. In light of these challenges, the Finance Committee, Select Board and Town Manager remain proud of the continued collaboration with the Groton Dunstable Regional School District.

In accordance with the Groton Charter and the Town’s Financial Policies, prior to the creation of the initial Budget, the Finance Committee and Select Board provided the following Guidance to the Town Manager:

- A. The Town Manager shall keep any increase in Municipal Spending in Fiscal Year 2026 to a total increase of \$475,000.
- B. Any remaining new revenues in Fiscal Year 2026 shall be used to cover the Proposed FY 2026 Operating Assessment of the Groton Dunstable Regional School District.

The Town Manager and Finance Committee spent a great deal of time reviewing and developing Revenue Estimates for Fiscal Year 2026. In accordance with the Town’s custom, revenue estimates were developed to be consistent with the five-year average in the various categories. The Governor has proposed increasing Groton’s Unrestricted Local Aid by \$40,621, from \$1,152,082 to \$1,192,703. With regard to New Growth, based on a recommendation from the Principal Assessor, the Town Manager and Finance Committee are estimating \$15 million in Growth, which will generate an additional \$228,750 in tax revenues in Fiscal Year 2026. The Fire & Emergency Medical Services Receipts Reserved for Appropriation Account will again provide \$350,000 in Fiscal Year 2026 to offset the Fire Department Budget. The Town Manager and Finance Committee continue to take a conservative approach in developing Estimated Receipts in FY 2026. Due to a change in the way the Town budgets benefit reimbursement by the various Enterprise Funds (explained below), local receipts will decrease by \$83,806 from \$5,652,133 to \$5,568,327, or a reduction of 1.5%. Please note that there will be a reduction in the Employee Benefits Budget for Health Insurance to reflect this decrease. The following is a summary of changes in some of the Estimated Receipt Categories:

1. **Motor Vehicle Excise Taxes** – The five-year average is \$1,823,309. In Fiscal Year 2024, the Town collected \$2,058,767 in Motor Vehicle Excise Taxes. Based on this, at this time, there will be a slight increase in Motor Vehicle Excise Taxes by \$39,417 to \$1,860,000 in FY 2026.
2. **Meals Tax/Room Occupancy Tax** – This continues to be an excellent revenue source for Groton. Based on current year collections, it is being increased by \$25,000 in Fiscal Year 2026 to \$425,000.
3. **Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTs)** – The Town is anticipating an increase of \$19,713 in PILOTs in FY 2026 from \$395,443 to \$415,156 based on the success of the ticket surcharge agreed to by Groton Hill Music.
4. **Other Departmental Revenue** – As stated above, in Fiscal Year 2026, the Town will change the way it receives reimbursement from the various Enterprises. Instead of appropriating the total amount of health insurance benefits in the Town Budget and then collecting the revenue from the Enterprises, the Enterprises will pay their share directly to our Health Insurance Carrier. To this end, this category was decreased by \$271,691 from \$854,063 to \$582,372 to reflect the new process.
5. **Recreation Revenues** – Based on the last five years of outstanding success of the Groton Country Club, this estimate is being increased by \$125,000 in FY 2026 from \$750,000 to \$875,000.

The following chart shows what we expect to receive in revenues that can be used to fund the Proposed Operating Budget:

Revenue Source	Budgeted FY 2025	Proposed FY 2026	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Property Tax*	\$ 38,052,807	\$ 39,317,497	\$ 1,264,690	3.32%
State Aid	\$ 1,152,082	\$ 1,192,703	\$ 40,621	3.53%
Local Receipts - Excluding Country Club	\$ 4,902,133	\$ 4,693,327	\$ (208,806)	-4.26%
Country Club Revenue	\$ 750,000	\$ 875,000	\$ 125,000	16.67%
Other Available Funds	\$ 350,000	\$ 350,000	\$ -	0.00%
TOTAL	\$ 45,207,022	\$ 46,428,527	\$ 1,221,505	2.70%

*Includes 2½ percent increase allowed by law and estimated \$15 million in new growth.

In developing the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget, a review of mandatory expenditures is warranted, as well as areas in the budget that are routine in nature. With regard to mandatory expenditures, two categories fit this definition, Pension and Health Insurance. With regard to the Pension Budget, Middlesex County has informed the Town that our Assessment in Fiscal Year 2026 will decrease by 0.49%, or by \$12,903 from \$2,653,019 to \$2,640,116.

With regard to Health Insurance, as you will recall, the Town left the Minuteman Nashoba Health Group (MNHG) last year and joined the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA). This was very beneficial for the Town in Fiscal Year 2025 as the Health Insurance Budget increased by less than five (5%) percent. Unfortunately, due to an unstable health insurance market, the rates have increased by 14.8% percent in Fiscal Year 2026. While the Town had anticipated a larger reduction in the Health Insurance Budget as explained earlier, the Health Insurance Line Item will still decrease by 12.77%, or \$279,497 from \$2,185,497 to \$1,906,470. That said, the 14.8% increase in rates required the Select Board and Finance

Committee to adjust their Budget Guidance and allow the Municipal Budget to increase by \$518,204, an additional \$43,204 over the original Budget Guidance.

The Town has six (6) Collective Bargaining Units. All contracts were up for renegotiation in Fiscal Year 2026. The Select Board, Finance Committee and Town Manager are pleased to announce that all six (6) Unions have agreed to new three year agreements that will provide budget stability over the next three years. Each Union has agreed to a nine (9%) percent increase over the next three years, or three (3%) percent per year. This is in line with current economic conditions and similar agreements settled in neighboring Towns, as well as the Agreement reached last year by the Groton Dunstable Regional School District and the Groton Dunstable Educators Association. Based on these Agreements, along with the employees that have contracts, salaries and wages will increase by \$377,688 in FY 2026.

Fiscal Year 2026 will see an increase in Excluded Debt as we pay debt service on the Florence Roche Elementary School Project to cover both debt that has been permanently financed (\$28 million), as well as borrowed using bond anticipation notes (BAN) (approximately \$27 million). In Fiscal Year 2026, the Town will renew the BAN on the remaining \$27 million in June, 2025, with a mandatory principal pay down. Based on this, it is expected that Municipal Excluded Debt will increase by \$755,260, or 17.2% from \$4,393,463 to \$5,148,723. Excluded Debt from the Groton Dunstable Regional School District will decrease by \$274,233, or 71.3% from \$384,622 to \$110,389. Overall, Excluded Debt will increase in Fiscal Year 2026 by \$481,074, or 10.1% from \$4,776,976 to \$5,258,050. The Town will continue its practice to stabilize debt service within the Levy Limit at approximately \$250,000 - \$300,000 annually. Funding from the Excess and Deficiency (“Free Cash”) Account and Emergency Medical Services Fund will be utilized to pay down the Principal and Interest on the Dump Truck for the Highway Department and Ambulance for the Fire Department. The following chart shows a comparison between FY 2025 and FY 2026:

	<u>FY 2025</u>	<u>FY 2026</u>
Long Term Debt - Principal Non-Excluded	\$ 165,000	\$ 165,000
Long Term Debt - Interest - Non-Excluded	\$ 110,364	\$ 97,144
Short Term Debt - Principal	\$ 123,526	\$ 122,685
Short Term Debt - Interest	\$ 8,644	\$ 21,851
Total	\$ 407,534	\$ 406,680
Less Free Cash Offset	\$ 132,170	\$ 43,922
Less EMS Fund Offset	\$ -	\$ 100,614
Total In-Levy Taxation for Debt Service	\$ 275,364	\$ 262,144

The Country Club continues to perform very well. Fiscal Year 2024 was another successful year for the Groton Country Club. It was a record year for revenue. The Club generated \$867,331 in revenue for FY 2024, which is \$72,962 more than FY 23 (another record year in which the Club generated \$794,369 in revenues). Based on the final expenditure total of \$854,972 (\$172,568 in salaries; \$253,111 in wages; \$223,824 in expenses; and \$205,469 in capital expenditures) the club made a slight profit of \$12,359. However, when you factor in overhead (health insurance, etc.), there was a taxpayer subsidy of \$49,016. That said, however, in FY 2023, the Club generated a profit of \$119,713, so over a two-year period, the Club has returned \$70,697 to the General Fund.

Based on the revised Budget Guidance from the Select Board and Finance Committee, the Municipal Budget will increase by \$518,204 in Fiscal Year 2026. In order to calculate the increase year over year, a review of the Final Approved Fiscal Year 2025 Budget is required. The 2024 Fall Town Meeting added several one-time expenses from Free Cash to the Budget. These expenses are not expected to re-occur in Fiscal Year 2026, and, therefore, need to be removed from the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget when calculating any increase in the Municipal Budget. The Final Proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Municipal Operating Budget by Function (not including Debt Service) is as follows:

	FY 2025 Original Appropriation	FY 2025 Fall Town Meeting Adjustments	FY 2026 Proposed	Difference From Original	Difference From Fall TM
General Government	\$ 2,498,370	\$ 2,574,970	\$ 2,565,835	\$ 67,465	\$ (9,135)
Land Use	\$ 520,749	\$ 520,749	\$ 549,503	\$ 28,754	\$ 28,754
Protection of Persons	\$ 4,515,079	\$ 4,683,315	\$ 4,864,896	\$ 349,817	\$ 181,581
DPW	\$ 2,389,516	\$ 2,389,516	\$ 2,475,216	\$ 85,700	\$ 85,700
Library/Citizen Services	\$ 2,200,457	\$ 2,288,957	\$ 2,439,509	\$ 239,052	\$ 150,552
Employee Benefits	\$ 5,174,990	\$ 5,199,336	\$ 4,922,406	\$ (252,584)	\$ (276,930)
Total	\$ 17,299,161	\$ 17,656,843	\$17,817,365	\$ 518,204	\$ 160,522

In presenting the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget, it is important to point out that the Groton Dunstable Regional School District is facing significant challenges. In Fiscal Year 2025, the Groton Dunstable Regional School District experienced a difficult year due to the failed override of Proposition 2½ in both Groton and Dunstable. This was compounded by the ongoing lack of adequate aid from the Commonwealth. As a result, the District was forced to make the tough decision to lay off 24 full-time equivalent employees. This reduction has had a profound impact on the District’s ability to provide the level of education Groton’s students deserve and expect. The District’s Budget in FY 2025 only saw an increase of 0.91%, which was insufficient to meet the growing needs of students and staff. In Fiscal Year 2026, the priority for the Town of Groton and the Groton Dunstable Regional School District must be to maintain services and ensure that they do not face further reductions in teaching positions. It is important to note that state aid currently accounts for only 25.8% of the District’s total revenues, which places a significant burden on the towns of Groton and Dunstable to cover the majority of the Operating Expenses. Specifically, Groton contributes approximately 55.3% of the total revenues, highlighting the critical role Groton plays in supporting the education mission of the District. The Town of Groton must continue to work collaboratively with both the School District and the Town of Dunstable to ensure that the District continues to provide a high-quality education that prepares the students for success.

Pursuant to the Guidance, after proposing a \$518,204 increase in the Municipal Budget, there is \$1,365,564, or 5.2% in available new revenues for the Groton Dunstable Regional School District in Fiscal Year 2026 without seeking an override of Proposition 2½. Unfortunately, this amount of funding is not enough to meet the needs of the District in Fiscal Year 2026. The Groton Dunstable Regional School District has approved a Budget with an increase of approximately six (6%) percent. This would require an increase in Groton’s Assessment of \$2,038,814, or an additional \$673,250 over what is currently available within the levy limit. Due to the flat subsidy received from the Commonwealth, the burden of funding this necessary increase to maintain services falls on the Towns of Groton and Dunstable. The School Committee is proposing the reinstatement of two critical positions that were cut in FY 2025 that are necessary for the well-being of students: one full-time school nurse needed to serve students in the Middle School North Building, and one counselor to provide adequate support for Middle School students. The

approved budget also includes a reduction of one full-time administrative assistant at the central office to offset the reinstatement of these critical positions. The approved Budget by the District School Committee prevents further reductions in personnel, however, it is important to state that it cannot fully address the impact of 30+ positions cut in FY 2024 and FY 2025, nor does it represent how the District can best support the educational needs of all students. Funding this proposed budget is critical to meet the needs of students, prevent further cuts, and provide the resources necessary to move the School District forward in the right direction.

For this reason, the Select Board, Finance Committee and Town Manager are in unanimous support of an Override of Proposition 2½ in Fiscal Year 2026 for the School District in the amount of \$673,250. This increase will allow the District to continue to provide a quality education to the children of Groton and provide the District another year to complete its various studies including changes in the Regional Agreement and Operational Audit to further streamline and improve its overall operation. A \$673,250 override would add \$0.25 to the anticipated FY 2026 Tax Rate and cost the average taxpayer (a home valued at \$707,877) an additional \$177.

The Town Meeting will be presented with a Balanced Budget which will increase the School District Assessment by \$1,365,564, and a contingent Budget seeking an additional \$673,250 in the School District Assessment contingent on an Override of Proposition 2½ at the May 20, 2025 Annual Town Election. Question 1 on the Ballot will read as follows:

QUESTION 1: Shall the Town of Groton be allowed to assess an additional \$673,250 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purpose of funding the Assessment of the Groton Dunstable Regional School District for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025?

Last year, Groton realized a major increase in the Assessment from the Nashoba Valley Technical School District based on an increase of nine (9) students from Groton attending the School. This year, there are four (4) fewer students attending the School. Based on this, the Assessment from Nashoba Tech has decreased in Fiscal Year 2026 by \$58,229, from \$966,719 to \$908,490.

The balanced Fiscal Year 2026 Operating Budget (within the anticipated levy limit) includes funding for two (2) additional Firefighter/EMTs that were added at the 2024 Fall Town Meeting. This brought the total number of full-time Firefighter/EMTs to ten (10), plus the Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief. The Select Board, by a vote of four (4) in favor and one (1) opposed (Pine), and the Finance Committee by a vote of five (5) in favor and two (2) deferred until Town Meeting (Robertson and Lengyel) are recommending that the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget be increased by \$630,904 to add an additional six (6) Firefighter/EMTs to the Groton Fire Department to bring the total number of full-time Firefighter/EMTs (not including the Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief) to sixteen (16) This will allow for four (4) Firefighter/EMTs to be on duty 24 hours per day, 7 days a week.

This request is not new, as additional staffing has been requested in the Fire Department as early as 2020. From Fiscal Year 2021 through Fiscal Year 2025, former Fire Chief Steele McCurdy and current Fire Chief Arthur Cheeks have provided data to justify the need for additional staffing in the Groton Fire Department. It should be made clear that the request for additional staffing has been discussed and requested long before the closure of the Nashoba Valley Medical Center. The call volume alone since 2021 has required a consideration of additional staffing. The Fire Department responded to 1,705 calls in 2024 compared to 1,465 calls just one year prior. Of the 1,705 requests, 53% were classified as EMS which is a 30% increase from 2023.

A brief history of this request is as follows:

- April 2021: The Fire Chief presented data to the Select Board explaining that 1/3 of the time within critical incidents, first level supervision forcing inexperienced Firefighters/EMTs to be expected to assume roles that were undesignated and outside of their job description. In addition, the Fire Chief proposed the following optimum level of staffing based on call volume and response times:

- Chief, Deputy Chief, 16 career Firefighters (4 of which are officers), 3 on call officers, & 25 + call/volunteer FF/EMTs. This request would result in adding 8 career Firefighters in FY 2022.

Town decided not to bring this forward.

- FY 2022 Budget Proposal: Select Board and Finance Committee were presented with the need for an additional Firefighter to free up the Deputy Chief to allow for a more focused and efficient fire prevention Community Risk Reduction activities without interfering with the day-to-day operations. While this has not been solidified yet and with the increase in call volume, the Fire Department is required to cancel or reschedule inspections, miss plan review meetings, not fulfill required school inspections in a timely manner etc.

Town decided not to bring this forward.

-FY 2023 Budget Proposal: Then Chief McCurdy requested 2 additional Firefighter/EMTs to bolster staffing needs and allow for a more level service. During his Budget Presentation, the following was presented:

- Presented that one more significant staffing increase was on the horizon to ultimately bring the staffing to 16.
- Proposed for the first time the idea of transforming the level of service we provide from a Basic Life Support System to an Advanced Life Support System.
- The Chief and Deputy Chief were assessed to have logged an extra 196 and 172 extra hours respectively. This number continues to grow due to increases in call volume and the lack of staffing. This results in burnout and low morale.

Town decided not to bring this forward.

-FY 2024 Budget Proposal: Then Chief Steele McCurdy and Deputy Chief Arthur Cheeks addressed the need for additional staffing by 2 Firefighter/EMTs and presented the goal to raise the Department's staffing levels to an optimum 16 career Firefighter/EMTs. Doing this would allow for the following:

- This would allow the Department to provide consistent service, response, safety for the Town and for the Firefighters on initial fire assignments.
- Further, it allows for a decrease in overall overtime costs, improve the Department's ability to fulfill and complete all Community Risk Reduction planning efforts as well as perform all day-to-day tasks, i.e., inspections, plan reviews, apparatus and equipment maintenance and readiness checks, training.

Town decided not to bring this forward.

-FY 2025 Budget Proposal: Continued the same message as previous years, including adding the following statistics (Please note that all of this was before the closure of Nashoba Valley Medical Center):

- Included the National Fire Protection Agencies minimum requirements (minimum of 6 firefighters on an initial fire response within 14 minutes).
- ISO ratings - Public Protection Classification - Lack ability to meet minimum requirements. This does have an impact on insurance premiums for our town homeowners.

Town decided to add two additional Firefighters at the 2024 Fall Town Meeting.

-FY 2026 Budget Proposal: Based on the foregoing, the Fire Chief requested six additional Firefighter/EMTs to allow for four Firefighters on every shift, which matches the request in April, 2021.

The Groton Fire Department call volume continues to increase, causing a strain on its ability to complete day to day tasks and provide level coverage for the town regardless of time of day. Please see the increase in call volume since 2019:

year	calls	Increase #	% change from previous year
2019	1312		
2020	1318	6	0.46
2021	1381	63	4.78
2022	1423	42	3.04
2023	1470	47	3.30
2024	1720	250	17.01

Currently, the Department is on pace for 1930 calls in 2025, which would amount to an additional increase of 12% in volume.

Mutual Aid requests have also increased over the last two years (again, before the closure of the Nashoba Valley Medical Center). Please consider the following:

- 2023: 299 total mutual aid services –
 - Of those 16 were for Structure Fires
 - 35 mutual aid services provided for EMS calls to other towns
- 2024: 421 total mutual aid services
 - Of those 20 for structure fires
 - 75 mutual aid EMS services provided to other towns

From January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022, out of 1423 total incidents, there were 163 overlapping incidents, or 11% of the total calls.

From January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023, out of 1470 total incidents, there were 207 overlapping calls, or 14% of the total calls.

From January 1, 2024 through August 31, 2024 (closure of Nashoba Valley Medical Center), out of 1085 total incidents, there were 140 overlapping calls, or 13% of the total calls.

From September 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024, out of 635 total incidents, there were 112 overlapping calls, or 18% of the total calls. This represents a 62% increase of the calls over the first 8 months of 2024.

As stated above, the Balanced Fiscal Year 2026 Budget presented to the Town Meeting will add two (2) Firefighter/EMT's to the Fire Department Budget. Based on the above explanation and similar to the request for additional funding for the Groton Dunstable Regional School District, the Select Board, Finance Committee and Town Manager are proposing the following contingent Budget for consideration by the Town Meeting that would require an Override of Proposition 2½:

Salary -	\$395,538
Holiday Pay -	\$ 51,166
Initial Gear -	\$ 24,000
Uniform Allowance -	\$ 10,200
Health Insurance (Family) -	<u>\$150,000</u>
Total	\$630,904

In addition, an anticipated increase in Pension Costs in Fiscal Year 2028 for adding these additional Firefighter/EMTs would require an additional \$150,000, bringing the total Override Request to \$780,904, with \$630,904 impacting the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget. A \$630,904 override would add \$0.22 to the anticipated FY 2026 Tax Rate and cost the average taxpayer (a home valued at \$707,877) an additional \$156.

Question 2 on the 2025 Annual Election Ballot will read as follows:

QUESTION 2: Shall the Town of Groton be allowed to assess an additional \$780,904 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purpose of funding six (6) additional Firefighter/EMTs for the Groton Fire Department for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025?

Section 6-5 of the Groton Charter requires the Finance Committee to provide a report that details the differences between the Town Manager's Proposed Budget and their final Proposed Budget. The following Chart shows the differences between the budget received by the Finance Committee from the Town Manager on January 31, 2025 and the budget that will be proposed to the 2025 Spring Town Meeting (please note that a majority of the approved adjustments are based on finalizing the various Union Contracts):

<u>Line</u>	<u>Department/Description</u>		<u>Original Proposed</u>		<u>Committee Approved</u>
1030	Town Manager Salaries	\$	262,550	\$	295,327
1050	Town Accountant Salaries	\$	125,385	\$	125,885
1060	Board of Assessors Salaries	\$	105,000	\$	105,500
1070	Treasurer/Collector Salaries	\$	165,810	\$	166,060
1090	Human Resource Salary	\$	100,175	\$	102,549
1100	Information Technology Salary	\$	128,532	\$	131,977
1130	Town Clerk Salaries	\$	105,356	\$	105,856
1200	Conservation Salary	\$	81,047	\$	85,565
1210	Planning Salaries	\$	97,928	\$	103,222
1240	Building Department Salaries	\$	107,263	\$	113,370
1300	Police Department Salaries	\$	319,324	\$	342,265
1301	Police Department Wages	\$	2,217,197	\$	2,305,558
1310	Fire Department Salaries	\$	282,144	\$	285,544
1400	Nashoba Tech Operating Assessment	\$	911,000	\$	908,490
1500	Highway Department Salaries	\$	174,625	\$	179,124
1501	Highway Department Wages	\$	750,409	\$	773,563
1502	Highway Department Expenses	\$	136,900	\$	147,900
1550	Solid Waste Wages	\$	158,964	\$	164,820
1600	Council on Aging Salaries	\$	171,205	\$	176,376
1710	Local Access Cable Department Salaries	\$	71,050	\$	75,511
3010	Health Insurance/Employee Expense	\$	2,087,511	\$	1,906,470
	Total	\$	8,559,375	\$	8,600,932

The following is the total proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Balanced Operating Budget proposed for Town Meeting consideration (compared with Fiscal Year 2025):

<u>Category</u>	<u>FY 2025</u>	<u>FY 2026</u>	<u>Dollar Difference</u>	<u>Percentage Change</u>
General Government	\$ 2,574,970	\$ 2,565,835	\$ (9,135)	-0.35%
Land Use	\$ 520,749	\$ 549,503	\$ 28,754	5.52%
Protection of Persons and Property	\$ 4,683,315	\$ 4,864,896	\$ 181,582	3.88%
Department of Public Works	\$ 2,389,516	\$ 2,475,216	\$ 85,700	3.59%
Library and Citizen Services	\$ 2,288,957	\$ 2,439,509	\$ 150,552	6.58%
Employee Benefits	\$ 5,199,336	\$ 4,922,406	\$ (276,930)	-5.33%
Sub-Total	\$ 17,656,843	\$ 17,817,366	\$ 160,524	0.91%
Debt Service - Excluded	\$ 4,393,463	\$ 5,148,723	\$ 755,260	17.19%
Debt Service - In Levy Only	\$ 538,989	\$ 406,680	\$ (132,309)	-24.55%
Sub-Total - All Municipal	\$ 22,589,295	\$ 23,372,769	\$ 783,475	3.47%
Nashoba Tech	\$ 966,719	\$ 908,490	\$ (58,229)	-6.02%
Groton-Dunstable Operating	\$ 26,412,384	\$ 27,777,948	\$ 1,365,564	5.17%
Groton Operating Grant	\$ 619,000	\$ -	\$ (619,000)	-100.00%
Groton-Dunstable Excluded Debt	\$ 384,622	\$ 110,389	\$ (274,233)	-71.30%
Groton-Dunstable In-Levy Debt	\$ 60,534	\$ -	\$ (60,534)	-100.00%
Groton Dunstable Capital	\$ 295,767	\$ 278,643	\$ (17,124)	-5.79%
Sub-Total - Education	\$ 28,739,026	\$ 29,075,470	\$ 336,444	1.17%
Grand Total - Town Budget	\$ 51,328,321	\$ 52,448,239	\$ 1,119,919	2.18%

The total Balanced Fiscal Year 2026 Proposed Operating Budget, including an increase of \$1,365,564 in the Assessment of the Groton Dunstable Regional School District and the Assessment of the Nashoba Valley Regional Technical High School, and excluded debt, is \$52,448,239, or an increase of 2.18%. This proposed Balanced Budget is at the anticipated FY 2026 Proposition 2½ Levy Limit. When you take into consideration the proposed Capital Budget, Enterprise Fund Budgets and additional appropriations raised on the recap sheet, the total proposed Balanced Budget is \$57,030,143. The Fiscal Year 2025 Tax Rate has been certified at \$15.25. Based on the Proposed Balanced Budget, the estimated Tax Rate for Fiscal Year 2026 is \$15.78, or an increase of \$0.53. In Fiscal Year 2025, the average Tax Bill in the Town of Groton (based on a home valued at \$707,877) is \$10,795. Under this proposed balanced budget, the same homeowner can expect a tax bill of \$11,170, or an increase of \$375. The following chart shows a comparison between FY 2025 and FY 2026:

	Actual FY 2025	Proposed FY 2026	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Levy Capacity Used	\$ 38,052,807	\$ 39,317,497	\$ 1,264,690	3.32%
Tax Rate on Levy Capacity Used	\$ 13.55	\$ 13.92	\$ 0.37	2.73%
Average Tax Bill	\$ 9,592	\$ 9,854	\$ 262	2.73%
Excluded Debt	\$ 4,776,976	\$ 5,258,050	\$ 481,074	10.07%
Tax Rate on Excluded Debt	\$ 1.70	\$ 1.86	\$ 0.16	9.41%
Average Tax Bill	\$ 1,203	\$ 1,317	\$ 113	9.41%
Final Levy Used	\$ 42,829,783	\$ 44,575,547	\$ 1,745,764	4.08%
Final Tax Rate	\$ 15.25	\$ 15.78	\$ 0.53	3.48%
Average Tax Bill	\$ 10,795	\$ 11,170	\$ 375	3.48%

The Town Meeting will be asked to consider the following increases to the Balanced Fiscal Year 2026 Operating Budget, contingent on an Override of Proposition 2½:

Question #1 - Additional Funding for Groton Dunstable Regional School District Assessment

<u>Line</u>	<u>Department/Description</u>	FY 2026 Proposed Within Levy	Additional Amount Requested	FY 2026 Proposed With Override	FY 2026 Additional Tax Rate Impact	FY 2026 Impact on Average Tax Bill
1410	GDRSD Operating Assessment	\$ 27,777,948	\$ 673,250	\$ 28,451,198	\$ 0.25	\$ 177
Total FY 2026 Question #1 Impact		\$ 27,777,948	\$ 673,250	\$ 28,451,198	\$ 0.25	\$ 177

Question #2 - Additional Funding to Add Six (6) Firefighters to the Groton Fire Department

1311	Fire Department Wages	\$ 1,367,470	\$ 446,704	\$ 1,814,174	\$ 0.16	\$ 113
1312	Fire Department Expenses	\$ 225,646	\$ 34,200	\$ 259,846	\$ 0.01	\$ 7
3010	Health Insurance/Employee Expenses	\$ 1,906,470	\$ 150,000	\$ 2,056,470	\$ 0.05	\$ 35
Sub-Total		\$ 3,499,586	\$ 630,904	\$ 4,130,490	\$ 0.22	\$ 156
3000	County Retirement (FY 2028)		\$ 150,000			
Total FY 2026 Question #2 Impact		\$ 3,499,586	\$ 780,904	\$ 4,130,490	\$ 0.22	\$ 156

The following chart shows the Tax Bill impact should both the Town Meeting and Annual Election approve the proposed increases in the School District Assessment and Fire Department Budget (comparison between FY 2025 and FY 2026):

	Actual FY 2025	Proposed FY 2026	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Levy Capacity Used	\$ 38,052,807	\$ 39,317,497	\$ 1,264,690	3.32%
Tax Rate on Levy Capacity Used	\$ 13.55	\$ 13.92	\$ 0.37	2.73%
Average Tax Bill	\$ 9,592	\$ 9,854	\$ 262	2.73%
Excluded Debt	\$ 4,776,976	\$ 5,258,050	\$ 481,074	10.07%
Tax Rate on Excluded Debt	\$ 1.70	\$ 1.86	\$ 0.16	9.41%
Average Tax Bill	\$ 1,203	\$ 1,317	\$ 113	9.41%
School District Override	\$ -	\$ 673,250	\$ 673,250	1.77%
Tax Rate on School District Override	\$ -	\$ 0.25	\$ 0.25	1.85%
Average Tax Bill	\$ -	\$ 177	\$ 177	1.85%
Fire Department Override	\$ -	\$ 630,904	\$ 630,904	1.66%
Tax Rate on Fire Override	\$ -	\$ 0.22	\$ 0.22	1.62%
Average Tax Bill	\$ -	\$ 156	\$ 156	1.62%
Final Levy Used	\$ 42,829,783	\$ 45,879,701	\$ 3,049,918	7.12%
Final Tax Rate	\$ 15.25	\$ 16.25	\$ 1.00	6.56%
Average Tax Bill	\$ 10,795	\$ 11,503	\$ 708	6.56%

The Finance Committee encourages the public to attend its meetings and contribute through asking questions, providing comments, and listening to others debate the many important financial issues before the Town today.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark W. Haddad

Groton Town Manager

Respectfully submitted,

Bud Robertson, Chair

Mary Linskey, Vice Chair

Gary Green

David Manugian

Scott Whitefield

Michael Sulprizio

Kristina Lengyel

Groton Finance Committee

**TOWN OF GROTON
FISCAL YEAR 2026
REVENUE ESTIMATES**

	BUDGETED FY 2025		ESTIMATED FY 2025		CHANGE
PROPERTY TAX REVENUE	\$ 38,052,807	\$	39,317,497	\$	1,264,690
DEBT EXCLUSIONS	\$ 4,773,475	\$	5,258,050	\$	484,575
CHERRY SHEET - STATE AID	\$ 1,152,082	\$	1,192,703	\$	40,621
UNEXPENDED TAX CAPACITY	\$ 82,556	\$	-	\$	(82,556)
LOCAL RECEIPTS:					
General Revenue:					
Motor Vehicle Excise Taxes	\$ 1,820,583	\$	1,860,000	\$	39,417
Meals Tax and Room Occupancy Tax	\$ 400,000	\$	425,000	\$	25,000
Marijuana Revenue	\$ 9,000	\$	15,000	\$	6,000
Penalties & Interest on Taxes	\$ 110,000	\$	110,000	\$	-
Payments in Lieu of Taxes	\$ 395,443	\$	415,156	\$	19,713
Other Charges for Services	\$ 15,000	\$	15,300	\$	300
Fees	\$ 400,000	\$	400,000	\$	-
Rentals	\$ 55,000	\$	58,000	\$	3,000
Library Revenues	\$ -	\$	-	\$	-
Other Departmental Revenue	\$ 854,063	\$	582,372	\$	(271,691)
Licenses and Permits	\$ 429,300	\$	450,000	\$	20,700
Fines and Forfeits	\$ 10,000	\$	10,000	\$	-
Investment Income	\$ 309,744	\$	258,499	\$	(51,245)
Recreation Revenues	\$ 750,000	\$	875,000	\$	125,000
Miscellaneous Recurring	\$ 94,000	\$	94,000	\$	-
Sub-total - General Revenue	\$ 5,652,133	\$	5,568,327	\$	(83,806)
Other Revenue:					
Free Cash	\$ 655,733	\$	603,855	\$	(51,878)
Capital Stablization Fund for GDRSD	\$ 295,767	\$	-	\$	(295,767)
Stabilization Fund for Tax Rate Relief	\$ -	\$	-	\$	-
Capital Asset Stabilization Fund	\$ 683,500	\$	841,435	\$	157,935
EMS/Conservation Fund Receipts Reserve	\$ 350,501	\$	530,614	\$	180,113
Community Preservation Funds	\$ -	\$	-	\$	-
Water Department Surplus	\$ -	\$	-	\$	-
Sewer Department Surplus	\$ -	\$	-	\$	-
Insurance Reimbursements	\$ -	\$	-	\$	-
Bond Surplus Transfer	\$ -	\$	-	\$	-
Local Access Cable Fund	\$ -	\$	130,000	\$	130,000
Sub-total - Other Revenue	\$ 1,985,501	\$	2,105,904	\$	120,403
WATER DEPARTMENT ENTERPRISE	\$ 2,310,266	\$	2,050,485	\$	(259,781)
SEWER DEPARTMENT ENTERPRISE	\$ 1,250,475	\$	976,475	\$	(274,000)
FOUR CORNER SEWER ENTERPRISE	\$ 98,040	\$	310,812	\$	212,772
STORMWATER UTILITY ENTERPRISE	\$ 247,851	\$	249,890	\$	2,040
TOTAL ESTIMATED REVENUE	\$ 55,605,186	\$	57,030,143	\$	1,424,957

**TOWN OF GROTON
FISCAL YEAR 2026
TAX LEVY CALCULATIONS**

FY 2026 PROPOSED EXPENDITURES

TOWN MANAGER - Proposed Budget

General Government	\$	2,565,835
Land Use Departments	\$	549,503
Protection of Persons and Property	\$	4,864,896
Regional School Districts	\$	29,075,470
Department of Public Works	\$	2,475,216
Library and Citizen Services	\$	2,439,509
Debt Service	\$	5,555,403
Employee Benefits	\$	4,922,406

Sub-Total - Operating Budget \$ 52,448,239

A. TOTAL DEPARTMENTAL BUDGET REQUESTS	\$	52,448,239
B. CAPITAL BUDGET REQUESTS	\$	921,435
C. ENTERPRISE FUND REQUESTS	\$	3,373,660
D. COMMUNITY PRESERVATION REQUEST		

OTHER AMOUNTS TO BE RAISED

1. Amounts certified for tax title purposes	\$	-
2. Debt and interest charges not included	\$	-
3. Final court judgments	\$	-
4. Total Overlay deficits of prior years	\$	-
5. Total cherry sheet offsets	\$	32,311
6. Revenue deficits	\$	-
7. Offset Receipts	\$	-
8. Authorized deferral of Teachers' Pay	\$	-
9. Snow and Ice deficit	\$	-
10. Other	\$	-

E. TOTAL OTHER AMOUNTS TO BE RAISED	\$	32,311
F. STATE AND COUNTY CHERRY SHEET CHARGES	\$	104,498
G. ALLOWANCE FOR ABATEMENTS AND EXEMPTIONS	\$	150,000

TOTAL PROPOSED EXPENDITURES \$ **57,030,143**

FY 2026 ESTIMATED RECEIPTS

ESTIMATED TAX LEVY

Levy Limit	\$	39,317,497
Debt Exclusion	\$	5,258,050

A. ESTIMATED TAX LEVY	\$	44,575,547
B. CHERRY SHEET ESTIMATED RECEIPTS	\$	1,192,703
C. LOCAL RECEIPTS NOT ALLOCATED	\$	5,568,327
D. OFFSET RECEIPTS	\$	-
E. ENTERPRISE FUNDS	\$	3,587,662
F. COMMUNITY PRESERVATION FUNDS	\$	-
G. FREE CASH	\$	603,855

OTHER AVAILABLE FUNDS

1. Stabilization Fund	\$	-
2. Capital Asset Fund	\$	841,435
3. GDRSD Capital Asset Fund	\$	-
4. EMS/Conservation Fund	\$	530,614
5. Bond Surplus Transfer	\$	-
6. Local Access Cable RRFA	\$	130,000

H. OTHER AVAILABLE FUNDS \$ 1,502,049

TOTAL ESTIMATED RECEIPTS \$ **57,030,143**

FY 2026 SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) \$ **(0)**

APPENDIX A

TOWN OF GROTON

FISCAL YEAR 2026

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
<u>GENERAL GOVERNMENT</u>							
MODERATOR							
1000	Salaries	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	0.21	0.00%
1001	Expenses	\$ -	\$ 80	\$ 80	\$ 80	0.02	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 1,000	\$ 1,080	\$ 1,080	\$ 1,080	0.22	0.00%
BOARD OF SELECTMEN							
1020	Salaries	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1021	Wages	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1022	Expenses	\$ 3,109	\$ 35,300	\$ 4,750	\$ 4,750	0.99	0.01%
1023	Engineering/Consultant	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1024	Minor Capital	\$ 24,054	\$ 24,054	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 27,163	\$ 59,354	\$ 4,750	\$ 4,750	0.99	0.01%
TOWN MANAGER							
1030	Salaries	\$ 252,037	\$ 258,863	\$ 295,327	\$ 295,327	61.51	0.55%
1031	Wages	\$ 111,472	\$ 141,837	\$ 107,625	\$ 107,625	22.41	0.20%
1032	Expenses	\$ 14,534	\$ 20,200	\$ 12,100	\$ 12,100	2.52	0.02%
1033	Engineering/Consultant	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1034	Performance Evaluations	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 378,043	\$ 420,900	\$ 415,052	\$ 415,052	86.44	0.77%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
FINANCE COMMITTEE							
1040	Expenses	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1041	Reserve Fund	\$ 39,500	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	31.24	0.28%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 39,500	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	31.24	0.28%
TOWN ACCOUNTANT							
1050	Salaries	\$ 115,615	\$ 118,163	\$ 125,885	\$ 125,885	26.22	0.23%
1051	Wages	\$ 54,285	\$ 56,679	\$ 79,344	\$ 79,344	16.52	0.15%
1052	Expenses	\$ 36,770	\$ 50,523	\$ 83,633	\$ 83,633	17.42	0.16%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 206,670	\$ 225,365	\$ 288,862	\$ 288,862	60.16	0.54%
BOARD OF ASSESSORS							
1060	Salaries	\$ 94,300	\$ 96,186	\$ 105,500	\$ 105,500	21.97	0.20%
1061	Wages	\$ 66,873	\$ 75,272	\$ 80,460	\$ 80,460	16.76	0.15%
1062	Expenses	\$ 45,336	\$ 47,032	\$ 61,579	\$ 61,579	12.82	0.11%
1063	Legal Expense	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 206,509	\$ 218,490	\$ 247,539	\$ 247,539	51.55	0.46%
TREASURER/TAX COLLECTOR							
1070	Salaries	\$ 150,769	\$ 153,977	\$ 166,060	\$ 166,060	34.58	0.31%
1071	Wages	\$ 79,296	\$ 82,940	\$ 81,418	\$ 81,418	16.96	0.15%
1072	Expenses	\$ 26,086	\$ 28,637	\$ 28,020	\$ 28,020	5.84	0.05%
1073	Tax Title	\$ 260	\$ 7,100	\$ 7,100	\$ 7,100	1.48	0.01%
1074	Bond Cost	\$ 500	\$ 2,300	\$ 2,300	\$ 2,300	0.48	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 256,911	\$ 274,954	\$ 284,898	\$ 284,898	59.33	0.53%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
TOWN COUNSEL							
1080	Expenses	\$ 95,387	\$ 130,000	\$ 90,000	\$ 90,000	18.74	0.17%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 95,387	\$ 130,000	\$ 90,000	\$ 90,000	18.74	0.17%
HUMAN RESOURCES							
1090	Salary	\$ 95,050	\$ 96,936	\$ 102,549	\$ 102,549	21.36	0.19%
1091	Expenses	\$ 18,674	\$ 12,400	\$ 14,400	\$ 14,400	3.00	0.03%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 113,724	\$ 109,336	\$ 116,949	\$ 116,949	24.36	0.22%
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY							
1100	Salary	\$ 121,627	\$ 124,810	\$ 131,977	\$ 131,977	27.49	0.25%
1101	Wages	\$ 70,342	\$ 73,459	\$ 77,173	\$ 77,173	16.07	0.14%
1102	Expenses	\$ 24,588	\$ 24,800	\$ 24,800	\$ 24,800	5.16	0.05%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 216,557	\$ 223,069	\$ 233,950	\$ 233,950	48.72	0.44%
GIS STEERING COMMITTEE							
1120	Expenses	\$ 8,300	\$ 8,300	\$ 8,300	\$ 8,300	1.73	0.02%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 8,300	\$ 8,300	\$ 8,300	\$ 8,300	1.73	0.02%
TOWN CLERK							
1130	Salaries	\$ 98,472	\$ 98,591	\$ 105,856	\$ 105,856	22.05	0.20%
1131	Wages	\$ 76,606	\$ 81,040	\$ 80,642	\$ 80,642	16.79	0.15%
1132	Expenses	\$ 11,860	\$ 13,900	\$ 13,200	\$ 13,200	2.75	0.02%
1135	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 186,938	\$ 193,531	\$ 199,698	\$ 199,698	41.59	0.37%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
ELECTIONS & BOARD OF REGISTRARS							
1140	Stipend	\$ 17,385	\$ 33,053	\$ 5,933	\$ 5,933	1.24	0.01%
1141	Expenses	\$ 23,119	\$ 21,088	\$ 16,124	\$ 16,124	3.36	0.03%
1142	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 40,504	\$ 54,141	\$ 22,057	\$ 22,057	4.59	0.04%
STREET LISTINGS							
1150	Expenses	\$ 5,698	\$ 5,950	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,200	1.50	0.01%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 5,698	\$ 5,950	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,200	1.50	0.01%
INSURANCE & BONDING							
1160	Insurance & Bonding	\$ 310,032	\$ 350,000	\$ 350,000	\$ 350,000	72.89	0.65%
1161	Insurance Deductible Reserve - Liability	\$ 11,499	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000	2.50	0.02%
1162	Insurance Deductible Reserve - 111F	\$ 1,238	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	5.21	0.05%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 322,769	\$ 387,000	\$ 387,000	\$ 387,000	80.60	0.72%
TOWN REPORT							
1170	Expenses	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	0.31	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	0.31	0.00%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
POSTAGE/TOWN HALL EXPENSES							
1180	Expenses	\$ 77,241	\$ 65,000	\$ 60,000	\$ 60,000	12.50	0.11%
1181	Telephone Expenses	\$ 23,494	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	6.25	0.06%
1182	Office Supplies	\$ 17,793	\$ 17,000	\$ 17,000	\$ 17,000	3.54	0.03%
<hr/>							
	DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL	\$ 118,528	\$ 112,000	\$ 107,000	\$ 107,000	22.28	0.20%
<hr/>							
	TOTAL GENERAL GOVERNMENT	\$ 2,225,701	\$ 2,574,970	\$ 2,565,835	\$ 2,565,835	534.36	4.78%

LAND USE DEPARTMENTS

CONSERVATION COMMISSION							
1200	Salary	\$ 70,533	\$ 79,070	\$ 85,565	\$ 85,565	17.82	0.16%
1201	Wages	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1202	Expenses	\$ 8,749	\$ 8,270	\$ 8,270	\$ 8,270	1.72	0.02%
1203	Engineering & Legal	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1204	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
<hr/>							
	DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL	\$ 79,282	\$ 87,340	\$ 93,835	\$ 93,835	19.54	0.17%

PLANNING BOARD							
1210	Salaries	\$ 95,171	\$ 97,696	\$ 103,222	\$ 103,222	21.50	0.19%
1211	Wages	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1212	Expenses	\$ 9,309	\$ 9,625	\$ 9,625	\$ 9,625	2.00	0.02%
1215	M.R.P.C. Assessment	\$ 3,942	\$ 4,041	\$ 4,142	\$ 4,142	0.86	0.01%
1216	Legal Budget	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
<hr/>							
	DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL	\$ 108,422	\$ 111,362	\$ 116,989	\$ 116,989	24.36	0.22%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS							
1220	Wages	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1221	Expenses	\$ 558	\$ 1,335	\$ 1,335	\$ 1,335	0.28	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 558	\$ 1,335	\$ 1,335	\$ 1,335	0.28	0.00%
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION							
1230	Wages		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1231	Expenses		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
BUILDING INSPECTOR							
1240	Salaries	\$ 105,059	\$ 107,030	\$ 113,370	\$ 113,370	23.61	0.21%
1241	Wages	\$ 62,238	\$ 63,935	\$ 67,500	\$ 67,500	14.06	0.13%
1242	Expenses	\$ 27,711	\$ 24,897	\$ 24,897	\$ 24,897	5.19	0.05%
1243	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 195,008	\$ 195,862	\$ 205,767	\$ 205,767	42.85	0.38%
MECHANICAL INSPECTOR							
1250	Fee Salaries	\$ 43,360	\$ 39,000	\$ 39,000	\$ 39,000	8.12	0.07%
1251	Expenses	\$ 3,107	\$ 3,500	\$ 3,500	\$ 3,500	0.73	0.01%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 46,467	\$ 42,500	\$ 42,500	\$ 42,500	8.85	0.08%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
EARTH REMOVAL INSPECTOR							
1260	Stipend	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	0.52	0.00%
1261	Expenses	\$ -	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300	0.06	0.00%
1262	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 2,500	\$ 2,800	\$ 2,800	\$ 2,800	0.58	0.01%
BOARD OF HEALTH							
1270	Wages	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1271	Expenses	\$ 877	\$ 1,575	\$ 1,575	\$ 1,575	0.33	0.00%
1272	Nursing Services	\$ -	\$ 17,798	\$ 21,047	\$ 21,047	4.38	0.04%
1273	Nashoba Health District	\$ 55,345	\$ 43,081	\$ 45,921	\$ 45,921	9.56	0.09%
1274	Herbert Lipton MH	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1275	Eng/Consult/Landfill Monitoring	\$ 9,433	\$ 13,834	\$ 13,834	\$ 13,834	2.88	0.03%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 65,655	\$ 76,288	\$ 82,377	\$ 82,377	17.16	0.15%
SEALER OF WEIGHTS & MEASURES							
1280	Fee Salaries	\$ 300	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1281	Expenses	\$ -	\$ 3,262	\$ 3,900	\$ 3,900	0.81	0.01%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 300	\$ 3,262	\$ 3,900	\$ 3,900	0.81	0.01%
TOTAL LAND USE DEPARTMENTS		\$ 498,192	\$ 520,749	\$ 549,503	\$ 549,503	114.44	1.02%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
<u>PROTECTION OF PERSONS AND PROPERTY</u>							
POLICE DEPARTMENT							
1300	Salaries	\$ 291,224	\$ 305,889	\$ 342,265	\$ 342,265	71.28	0.64%
1301	Wages	\$ 1,957,470	\$ 2,222,071	\$ 2,305,558	\$ 2,305,558	480.16	4.30%
1302	Expenses	\$ 195,295	\$ 270,952	\$ 269,900	\$ 269,900	56.21	0.50%
1303	Lease or Purchase of Cruisers	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1304	PS Building (Expenses)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1305	Minor Capital	\$ 6,420	\$ 12,984	\$ 26,550	\$ 26,550	5.53	0.05%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 2,455,409	\$ 2,816,896	\$ 2,944,273	\$ 2,944,273	613.18	5.49%
FIRE DEPARTMENT							
1310	Salaries	\$ 290,302	\$ 292,712	\$ 285,544	\$ 285,544	59.47	0.53%
1311	Wages	\$ 1,150,339	\$ 1,314,672	\$ 1,367,470	\$ 1,367,470	284.79	2.55%
1312	Expenses	\$ 209,902	\$ 219,571	\$ 225,646	\$ 225,646	46.99	0.42%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 1,650,543	\$ 1,826,955	\$ 1,878,659	\$ 1,878,659	391.25	3.50%
GROTON WATER FIRE PROTECTION							
1320	West Groton Water District	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1321	Groton Water Department	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
ANIMAL INSPECTOR							
1330	Salary	\$ 2,082	\$ 2,082	\$ 2,082	\$ 2,082	0.43	0.00%
1331	Expenses	\$ 266	\$ 400	\$ 400	\$ 400	0.08	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 2,348	\$ 2,482	\$ 2,482	\$ 2,482	0.52	0.00%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER							
1340	Salary	\$ 2,082	\$ 2,082	\$ 2,082	\$ 2,082	0.43	0.00%
1341	Expenses	\$ 266	\$ 400	\$ 400	\$ 400	0.08	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 2,348	\$ 2,482	\$ 2,482	\$ 2,482	0.52	0.00%
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY							
1350	Salary	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	0.83	0.01%
1351	Expenses	\$ 40,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	2.08	0.02%
1352	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 44,000	\$ 14,000	\$ 14,000	\$ 14,000	2.92	0.03%
DOG OFFICER							
1360	Salary	\$ 15,000	\$ 17,500	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	4.17	0.04%
1361	Expenses	\$ 2,929	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	0.62	0.01%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 17,929	\$ 20,500	\$ 23,000	\$ 23,000	4.79	0.04%
POLICE & FIRE COMMUNICATIONS							
1370	Wages	\$ 455,726	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1371	Expenses	\$ 14,018	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1372	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 469,744	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
TOTAL PROTECTION OF		\$ 4,642,321	\$ 4,683,315	\$ 4,864,896	\$ 4,864,896	1,013.17	9.07%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
<u>REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGETS</u>							
NASHOBA VALLEY REGIONAL TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL							
1400	Operating Expenses	\$ 762,656	\$ 966,719	\$ 908,490	\$ 908,490	189.20	1.69%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 762,656	\$ 966,719	\$ 908,490	\$ 908,490	189.20	1.69%
GROTON-DUNSTABLE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT							
1410	Operating Expenses	\$ 25,937,716	\$ 26,412,384	\$ 27,777,948	\$ 27,777,948	5,785.08	51.79%
1411	Debt Service, Excluded	\$ 406,982	\$ 384,622	\$ 110,389	\$ 110,389	22.99	0.21%
1412	Debt Service, Unexcluded	\$ 58,814	\$ 60,534	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1413	Operating Grant	\$ -	\$ 619,000	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1414	Capital Assessment	\$ 552,203	\$ 295,767	\$ 278,643	\$ 278,643	58.03	0.52%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 26,955,715	\$ 27,772,307	\$ 28,166,980	\$ 28,166,980	5,866.10	52.52%
TOTAL SCHOOLS		\$ 27,718,371	\$ 28,739,026	\$ 29,075,470	\$ 29,075,470	6,055.30	54.21%

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT							
1500	Salaries	\$ 120,293	\$ 122,664	\$ 179,124	\$ 179,124	37.30	0.33%
1501	Wages	\$ 731,227	\$ 753,789	\$ 773,563	\$ 773,563	161.10	1.44%
1502	Expenses	\$ 129,073	\$ 136,900	\$ 147,900	\$ 147,900	30.80	0.28%
1503	Highway Maintenance	\$ 71,282	\$ 80,000	\$ 80,000	\$ 80,000	16.66	0.15%
1504	Minor Capital	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	3.12	0.03%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 1,066,875	\$ 1,108,353	\$ 1,195,587	\$ 1,195,587	248.99	2.23%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
STREET LIGHTS							
1510	Expenses	\$ 14,598	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	3.12	0.03%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 14,598	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	3.12	0.03%
SNOW AND ICE							
1520	Expenses	\$ 153,024	\$ 165,000	\$ 165,000	\$ 165,000	34.36	0.31%
1521	Overtime	\$ 228,416	\$ 140,000	\$ 140,000	\$ 140,000	29.16	0.26%
1522	Hired Equipment	\$ 45,400	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000	7.29	0.07%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 426,840	\$ 340,000	\$ 340,000	\$ 340,000	70.81	0.63%
TREE WARDEN BUDGET							
1530	Salary	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1531	Expenses	\$ 1,773	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	0.62	0.01%
1532	Trees	\$ -	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	0.31	0.00%
1533	Tree Work	\$ 31,370	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	6.25	0.06%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 33,143	\$ 34,500	\$ 34,500	\$ 34,500	7.19	0.06%
MUNICIPAL BUILDING AND PROPERTY MAINTENANCE							
1540	Wages	\$ 138,182	\$ 162,845	\$ 170,064	\$ 170,064	35.42	0.32%
1541	Expenses	\$ 270,921	\$ 270,950	\$ 282,950	\$ 282,950	58.93	0.53%
1542	Minor Capital	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	3.12	0.03%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 434,103	\$ 458,795	\$ 468,014	\$ 468,014	97.47	0.87%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL							
1550	Wages	\$ 145,954	\$ 157,651	\$ 164,820	\$ 164,820	34.33	0.31%
1551	Expenses	\$ 38,661	\$ 45,686	\$ 45,686	\$ 45,686	9.51	0.09%
1552	Tipping Fees	\$ 139,668	\$ 145,000	\$ 145,000	\$ 145,000	30.20	0.27%
1553	North Central SW Coop	\$ 5,850	\$ 5,850	\$ 5,850	\$ 5,850	1.22	0.01%
1554	Minor Capital	\$ 4,717	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	1.04	0.01%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 334,850	\$ 359,187	\$ 366,356	\$ 366,356	76.30	0.68%
PARKS DEPARTMENT							
1560	Wages	\$ 12,664	\$ 17,922	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1561	Expenses	\$ 55,578	\$ 55,759	\$ 55,759	\$ 55,759	11.61	0.10%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 68,242	\$ 73,681	\$ 55,759	\$ 55,759	11.61	0.10%
TOTAL DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS		\$ 2,378,651	\$ 2,389,516	\$ 2,475,216	\$ 2,475,216	515.49	4.61%
<u>LIBRARY AND CITIZEN'S SERVICES</u>							
COUNCIL ON AGING							
1600	Salaries	\$ 148,800	\$ 162,023	\$ 176,376	\$ 176,376	36.73	0.33%
1601	Wages	\$ 45,585	\$ 55,733	\$ 70,526	\$ 70,526	14.69	0.13%
1602	Expenses	\$ 11,417	\$ 20,200	\$ 20,200	\$ 20,200	4.21	0.04%
1603	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 205,802	\$ 237,956	\$ 267,102	\$ 267,102	55.63	0.50%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
SENIOR CENTER VAN							
1610	Wages	\$ 74,885	\$ 76,611	\$ 82,100	\$ 82,100	17.10	0.15%
1611	Expenses	\$ 15,488	\$ 21,023	\$ 21,023	\$ 21,023	4.38	0.04%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 90,373	\$ 97,634	\$ 103,123	\$ 103,123	21.48	0.19%
VETERAN'S SERVICE OFFICER							
1620	Salary	\$ 6,120	\$ 6,242	\$ 6,429	\$ 6,429	1.34	0.01%
1621	Expenses	\$ 50	\$ 1,100	\$ 1,100	\$ 1,100	0.23	0.00%
1622	Veterans' Benefits	\$ 22,771	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	5.21	0.05%
1623	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENT TOTAL		\$ 28,941	\$ 32,342	\$ 32,529	\$ 32,529	6.77	0.06%
GRAVES REGISTRATION							
1630	Salary/Stipend	\$ 250	\$ 250	\$ 250	\$ 250	0.05	0.00%
1631	Expenses	\$ 750	\$ 760	\$ 1,060	\$ 1,060	0.22	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 1,000	\$ 1,010	\$ 1,310	\$ 1,310	0.27	0.00%
CARE OF VETERAN GRAVES							
1640	Contract Expenses	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	0.31	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	0.31	0.00%
OLD BURYING GROUND COMMITTEE							
1650	Expenses	\$ -	\$ 800	\$ 800	\$ 800	0.17	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ -	\$ 800	\$ 800	\$ 800	0.17	0.00%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
LIBRARY							
1660	Salary	\$ 435,562	\$ 453,631	\$ 480,538	\$ 480,538	100.08	0.90%
1661	Wages	\$ 319,135	\$ 355,706	\$ 366,043	\$ 366,043	76.23	0.68%
1662	Expenses	\$ 225,435	\$ 219,966	\$ 230,546	\$ 230,546	48.01	0.43%
1663	Minor Capital		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 980,132	\$ 1,029,303	\$ 1,077,127	\$ 1,077,127	224.32	2.01%
COMMEMORATIONS & CELEBRATIONS							
1670	Expenses	\$ 253	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	0.10	0.00%
1671	Fireworks	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 253	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	0.10	0.00%
WATER SAFETY							
1680	Wages	\$ 1,290	\$ 4,560	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	1.04	0.01%
1681	Expenses and Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ 4,683	\$ 3,950	\$ 3,950	0.82	0.01%
1682	Property Maint. & Improvements	\$ 7,108	\$ 10,900	\$ 2,400	\$ 2,400	0.50	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 8,398	\$ 20,143	\$ 11,350	\$ 11,350	2.36	0.02%
WEED MANAGEMENT							
1690	Wages	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
1691	Expenses: Weed Harvester	\$ 17,666	\$ 22,000	\$ 22,000	\$ 22,000	4.58	0.04%
1692	Expenses: Great Lakes	\$ 9,965	\$ 100,885	\$ 22,385	\$ 22,385	4.66	0.04%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 27,631	\$ 122,885	\$ 44,385	\$ 44,385	9.24	0.08%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
GROTON COUNTRY CLUB							
1700	Salary	\$ 172,568	\$ 177,727	\$ 205,094	\$ 205,094	42.71	0.38%
1701	Wages	\$ 253,111	\$ 243,941	\$ 295,791	\$ 295,791	61.60	0.55%
1702	Expenses	\$ 223,824	\$ 167,774	\$ 235,885	\$ 235,885	49.13	0.44%
1703	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 649,503	\$ 589,442	\$ 736,770	\$ 736,770	153.44	1.37%
LOCAL ACCESS CABLE DEPARTMENT							
1710	Salaries	\$ -	\$ 71,048	\$ 75,511	\$ 75,511	15.73	0.14%
1711	Wages	\$ -	\$ 61,219	\$ 68,232	\$ 68,232	14.21	0.13%
1712	Expenses	\$ -	\$ 18,175	\$ 14,270	\$ 14,270	2.97	0.03%
1713	Minor Capital	\$ -	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	1.04	0.01%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ -	\$ 155,442	\$ 163,013	\$ 163,013	33.95	0.30%
TOTAL LIBRARY AND CITIZEN SERVICES		\$ 1,993,533	\$ 2,288,957	\$ 2,439,509	\$ 2,439,509	508.06	4.55%
<u>DEBT SERVICE</u>							
DEBT SERVICE							
2000	Long Term Debt - Principal Excluded	\$ 2,023,506	\$ 2,025,000	\$ 2,045,000	\$ 2,045,000	425.89	3.81%
2001	Long Term Debt - Principal Non-Excluded	\$ -	\$ 160,000	\$ 165,000	\$ 165,000	34.36	0.31%
2002	Long Term Debt - Interest - Excluded	\$ 1,493,326	\$ 1,340,252	\$ 1,258,527	\$ 1,258,527	262.10	2.35%
2003	Long Term Debt - Interest - Non-Excluded	\$ -	\$ 106,974	\$ 97,144	\$ 97,144	20.23	0.18%
2004	Short Term Debt - Principal - Town	\$ -	\$ 247,532	\$ 122,685	\$ 122,685	25.55	0.23%
2005A	Short Term Debt - Interest - Non Excluded	\$ -	\$ 24,483	\$ 21,851	\$ 21,851	4.55	0.04%
2005B	Short Term Debt - Interest - Excluded	\$ 1,045,344	\$ 1,028,211	\$ 1,845,196	\$ 1,845,196	384.28	3.44%
DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$ 4,562,176	\$ 4,932,452	\$ 5,555,403	\$ 5,555,403	1,156.98	10.36%
TOTAL DEBT SERVICE		\$ 4,562,176	\$ 4,932,452	\$ 5,555,403	\$ 5,555,403	1,156.98	10.36%

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	FY 2026 FINCOM BUDGET	FY 2026 AVERAGE TAX BILL	FY 2026 PERCENT OF TAX BILL
<u>EMPLOYEE BENEFITS</u>							
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS							
GENERAL BENEFITS							
3000	County Retirement	\$ 2,494,280	\$ 2,653,019	\$ 2,640,116	\$ 2,640,116	549.83	4.92%
3001	State Retirement	\$ 185,000	\$ 190,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	41.65	0.37%
3002	Unemployment Compensation	\$ 678	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	2.08	0.02%
INSURANCE							
3010	Health Insurance/Employee Expenses	\$ 2,017,056	\$ 2,185,497	\$ 1,906,470	\$ 1,906,470	397.04	3.55%
3011	Life Insurance	\$ 3,627	\$ 3,820	\$ 3,820	\$ 3,820	0.80	0.01%
3012	Medicare/Social Security	\$ 154,288	\$ 157,000	\$ 162,000	\$ 162,000	33.74	0.30%
<hr/>							
	DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL	\$ 4,854,929	\$ 5,199,336	\$ 4,922,406	\$ 4,922,406	1,025.15	9.18%
	TOTAL EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	\$ 4,854,929	\$ 5,199,336	\$ 4,922,406	\$ 4,922,406	1,025.15	9.18%
 <u>ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS</u>							
ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS							
	Capital Budget Request	\$ 800,142	\$ 862,144	\$ 899,435	\$ 899,435	187.32	1.68%
	Offset Receipts	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
	Cherry Sheet Offsets	\$ 29,051	\$ 32,678	\$ 32,311	\$ 32,311	6.73	0.06%
	Snow and Ice Deficit	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	0.00%
	State and County Charges	\$ 98,662	\$ 101,446	\$ 104,498	\$ 104,498	21.76	0.19%
	Allowance for Abatements/Exemptions	\$ 151,515	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	31.24	0.28%
<hr/>							
	DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL	\$ 1,079,370	\$ 1,146,268	\$ 1,186,244	\$ 1,186,244	247.05	2.21%
	GRAND TOTAL - TOWN BUDGET	\$ 49,953,244	\$ 52,474,589	\$ 53,634,483	\$ 53,634,483	11,170	100.00%

Contingent Budget - Additional Requested Amount for Override Questions To Be Held at Annual Town Election on Tuesday, May 20, 2025

Question #1 - Additional Funding for Groton Dunstable Regional School District Assessment

<u>Line</u>	<u>Department/Description</u>		FY 2026 Proposed Within Levy		Additional Amount Requested		FY 2026 Proposed With Override		FY 2026 Additional Tax Rate Impact		FY 2026 Impact on Average Tax Bill
1410	GDRSD Operating Assessment	\$	27,777,948	\$	673,250	\$	28,451,198	\$	0.25	\$	177
Total FY 2026 Question #1 Impact		\$	27,777,948	\$	673,250	\$	28,451,198	\$	0.25	\$	177

Question #2 - Additional Funding to Add Six (6) Firefighters to the Groton Fire Department

1311	Fire Department Wages	\$	1,367,470	\$	446,704	\$	1,814,174	\$	0.16	\$	113
1312	Fire Department Expenses	\$	225,646	\$	34,200	\$	259,846	\$	0.01	\$	7
3010	Health Insurance/Employee Expenses	\$	1,906,470	\$	150,000	\$	2,056,470	\$	0.05	\$	35
	Sub-Total	\$	3,499,586	\$	630,904	\$	4,130,490	\$	0.22	\$	156
3000	County Retirement (FY 2028)			\$	150,000						
Total FY 2026 Question #2 Impact		\$	3,499,586	\$	780,904	\$	4,130,490	\$	0.22	\$	156

FY 2026 ENTERPRISE FUND BUDGETS

LINE	DEPARTMENT/DESCRIPTION	FY 2022 ACTUAL	FY 2023 ACTUAL	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 APPROPRIATED	FY 2026 DEPARTMENT REQUEST	FY 2026 TOWN MANAGER BUDGET	PERCENT CHANGE
WATER DEPARTMENT								
	WD Salaries	\$ 152,121	\$ 163,248	\$ 171,916	\$ 176,650	\$ 204,133	\$ 204,133	15.56%
	WD Wages	\$ 255,303	\$ 269,339	\$ 283,667	\$ 300,075	\$ 310,821	\$ 310,821	3.58%
	WD Expenses	\$ 526,019	\$ 573,697	\$ 704,577	\$ 637,300	\$ 675,612	\$ 675,612	6.01%
	WD Debt Service	\$ 369,185	\$ 478,239	\$ 727,946	\$ 1,196,241	\$ 859,919	\$ 859,919	-28.11%
100	DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL	\$ 1,302,628	\$ 1,484,523	\$ 1,888,106	\$ 2,310,266	\$ 2,050,485	\$ 2,050,485	-11.24%
SEWER DEPARTMENT								
	Sewer Salaries	\$ 21,579	\$ 23,104	\$ 23,372	\$ 24,300	\$ 26,748	\$ 26,748	10.07%
	Sewer Wages	\$ 51,737	\$ 45,907	\$ 54,740	\$ 57,195	\$ 60,099	\$ 60,099	5.08%
	Sewer Expense	\$ 683,919	\$ 781,027	\$ 701,285	\$ 1,142,338	\$ 864,082	\$ 864,083	-24.36%
	Sewer Debt Service	\$ 5,316	\$ 5,099	\$ 4,995	\$ 26,642	\$ 25,545	\$ 25,545	-4.12%
200	DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL	\$ 762,551	\$ 855,137	\$ 784,392	\$ 1,250,475	\$ 976,474	\$ 976,475	-21.91%
FOUR CORNERS SEWER DEPARTMENT								
	Four Corners Sewer Salaries	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,597	\$ 2,700	\$ 2,972	\$ 2,972	100.00%
	Four Corners Sewer Wages	\$ -	\$ 7,683	\$ 6,082	\$ 6,355	\$ 6,678	\$ 6,678	5.08%
	Four Corners Sewer Expense	\$ 54,555	\$ 128,224	\$ 71,475	\$ 88,985	\$ 301,162	\$ 301,162	238.44%
	Four Corners Sewer Debt Service	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0.00%
300	DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL	\$ 54,555	\$ 135,907	\$ 80,154	\$ 98,040	\$ 310,812	\$ 310,812	217.03%
LOCAL ACCESS CABLE DEPARTMENT								
	Cable Salaries	\$ 69,975	\$ 69,290	\$ 69,290	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0.00%
	Cable Wages	\$ 55,827	\$ 62,574	\$ 62,574	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0.00%
	Cable Expenses	\$ 52,535	\$ 85,774	\$ 85,774	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0.00%
	Cable Minor Capital	\$ 5,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0.00%
400	DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL	\$ 183,337	\$ 217,638	\$ 217,638	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0.00%
STORMWATER UTILITY								
	Stormwater Wages/Benefits	\$ 74,091	\$ 77,629	\$ 78,357	\$ 84,851	\$ 86,890	\$ 86,890	2.40%
	Stormwater Expenses	\$ 57,416	\$ 81,441	\$ 108,437	\$ 112,000	\$ 112,000	\$ 112,000	0.00%
	Stormwater Capital Outlay	\$ 42,201	\$ 51,000	\$ 89,791	\$ 51,000	\$ 51,000	\$ 51,000	0.00%
500	DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL	\$ 173,708	\$ 210,070	\$ 276,585	\$ 247,851	\$ 249,890	\$ 249,890	0.82%
TOTAL ENTERPRISE FUNDS		\$ 2,476,779	\$ 2,903,275	\$ 3,246,875	\$ 3,906,632	\$ 3,587,661	\$ 3,587,662	-8.16%

APPENDIX B

FACTOR: 1.0300

**Town of Groton Personnel By-Law
Wage and Classification Schedule
Fiscal Year 2026 (Effective July 1, 2025)**

Grade	Position Title	Low	High
4	Salary	43,557	53,903
	Wages	20.97	25.89
5	Salary	46,045	55,818
	Wages	22.16	27.40
7	Salary	53,241	67,438
	Wages	26.21	32.42
8	Salary	60,440	74,836
	Wages	29.06	35.98
9	Salary	62,253	76,592
	Wages	29.77	36.82
10	Salary Executive Assistant to Town Manager	70,987	89,595
	Wages	34.14	43.07
11	Salary	74,069	94,374
	Wages	35.61	45.37
12	Salary	76,492	96,659
	Wages	36.77	46.54

APPENDIX B
Town of Groton Personnel By-Law
Wage and Classification Schedule
Fiscal Year 2026 (Effective July 1, 2025)

FACTOR: 1.0300

Grade	Position Title	Low	High
13	Salary Human Resources Director	79,223	100,553
	Wages	38.09	48.34
14	Salary	80,907	102,394
	Wages	38.89	46.14
15	Salary	83,528	103,331
	Wages	40.16	49.68
16	Salary	86,546	109,180
	Wages	41.61	52.49
17	Salary	96,959	119,647
	Wages	46.64	57.67
18	Salary IT Director	104,855	129,766
	Wages	50.42	62.39
19	Salary	107,608	133,149
	Wages	51.74	64.01
20	Salary	115,383	141,904
	Wages	55.48	68.22

APPENDIX B
NON-CLASSIFIED, TEMPORARY SEASONAL AND STIPEND POSITIONS

NON-STEP AND STIPEND POSITIONS

FIRE/EMS DEPARTMENT

Call Captain: Fire	27.46
Call Lieutenant: Fire	26.90
Call Firefighter	23.55
Call Emergency Medical Technician	23.55
Probationary Firefighter	19.61
Probationary Emergency Medical Technician	19.61

Country Club Seasonal Employees

Pro Shop Staff	MW *- 19.57
Pool Staff	MW - 19.57
Lifeguards	MW - 20.60
Swim Coaches	MW - 25.75
Camp Staff	MW - 19.57
Counselors	MW - 20.60
Buildings & Grounds	MW - 29.87
Library Shelves	MW - 20.00

MISCELLANEOUS

Veteran's Agent	6,430
Earth Removal Inspector	2,500
Dog Officer	20,000
Animal Inspector	2,082
Animal Control Officer	2,082
Town Diarist	1.00
Keeper of the Town Clock	1.00
Per Diem Van Driver	20.10 - 22.62
Park Ranger	Minimum Wage
Graves Registration Officer	250
Emergency Management Director	4,000
Election Worker: Warden	Minimum Wage
Election Worker: Precinct Clerk	Minimum Wage
Election Worker: Inspectors (Checker)	Minimum Wage

* - Minimum Wage

APPENDIX C

GROTON CHARTER WITH PROPOSED AMENDMENTS USING TRACK CHANGES

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CHARTER (2025~~2~~)

[HISTORY: Enacted by the General Court as Ch. 121 of the Acts of 2019.¹ Amendments noted where applicable.] [2022 Amendments enacted by the General Court as Chapter 41 of the Acts of 2022.]

ARTICLE 1: INCORPORATION, EXISTENCE AND AUTHORITY

Section 1.1: Incorporation

The inhabitants of the town of Groton, within the corporate limits established by law, shall continue to be a body corporate and politic with perpetual succession under the name "town of Groton."

Section 1.2: Short Title

This instrument shall be known and cited as the Groton charter.

Section 1.3: Powers of the Town

It is the intent and purpose of the voters of the town, through the adoption of this charter, to secure for the town all of the powers possible under the constitution and laws of the commonwealth as fully and as completely as though each power were specifically and individually enumerated in this charter.

Section 1.4: Division of Powers

The administration of all the fiscal, prudential and municipal affairs of the town shall be vested in an executive branch headed by a select board and a town manager. The legislative powers shall be exercised by an open town meeting.

Section 1.5: Interpretation of Powers

The powers reserved or granted to the town under this charter shall be construed liberally and interpreted broadly in the town’s favor and the specific mention of any particular power shall not limit the general powers of the town under section 1.3.

Section 1.6: Intergovernmental Relations

The town may enter into agreements with any other unit of government to perform jointly or in cooperation, by contract or otherwise, any of the town’s powers or functions.

Section 1.7: Precedence of Charter Provisions

All General Laws, special laws, by-laws, votes, rules and regulations of or pertaining to the town that are in force when the charter takes effect and that are not specifically or by implication repealed directly or indirectly hereby shall continue in full force and effect until amended or repealed or until they expire by their own terms.

Section 1.8: Ethical Standards and Conduct

Elected officers, appointed officials, employees and volunteers of the town shall demonstrate by their example, with their general conduct and in the performance of their duties and responsibilities the highest ethical standards so that the public may justifiably have trust and confidence in the integrity of the town’s government. Such individuals shall recognize that they act always as agents for the public, that they hold their office or position for the benefit of the public, that the public interest is their primary concern and that they faithfully discharge the duties of their office regardless of personal considerations. Such an individual shall not use the individual’s official position to secure or grant special consideration, treatment, advantage, privilege or exemption to themselves or to any other person beyond that which is available to every other person.

Section 1.9: Definitions

As used in this charter, the following words shall, unless the context clearly requires otherwise, have the following meanings:-

"Appointed official", an individual serving in appointed office who exercises the powers or duties of that office with authority derived from the General Laws, this charter, vote of town meeting or the town’s by-laws.

"Charter", this charter and any amendments to it that may hereafter be adopted.

"Days", business days, not including Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays; provided, however, that when the time set is not less than 7 days, every day shall be included.

"Department head", an individual having administrative authority over a town department. "Elected officer", an individual serving in elected office who, in the exercise of the powers or duties of that office, exercises some portion of the sovereign power of the town.

"Emergency", a sudden, unexpected and unforeseen happening, occurrence, event or condition that necessitates immediate action.

"Local newspaper", a newspaper of general circulation in the town.

"Majority vote", a majority of those present and voting; provided, that a quorum is present when the vote is taken.

"Multiple-member body", a town body consisting of not less than 2 persons, whether called a board, commission, committee, subcommittee or otherwise and however elected, appointed or otherwise constituted.

["Publish", posting a document on the Town website and in a prominent and accessible location, with hard copies made available upon request.](#)

"Quorum", except for a town meeting and unless otherwise required by law or this charter, a majority of the members of a multiple member body then in office, not including any vacancies that may then exist.

"Town", the town of Groton.

"Town agency", a board, commission, committee, department or office of the town government.

"Town bulletin board", a bulletin board in the town hall on which official notices are posted and boards at other town buildings or facilities that may be designated by the town clerk as town bulletin boards.

"Town meeting", the open town meeting established in article 2, whether annual or special.

"Voters", registered voters of the town.

"Warrant", a document required to warn and notify residents and inhabitants of the town, who are qualified to vote in town affairs, to meet at a specific place to act on published articles relating to the governance of the town.

ARTICLE 2: LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

Section 2.1: Town Meeting

The legislative powers of the town shall be exercised by a town meeting open to all voters. The annual town meeting shall meet in regular session twice in each calendar year. The first meeting, which shall be the spring town meeting, shall be held in March, April or May on a date fixed by by-law and shall be primarily concerned with the determination of matters involving the expenditure of town funds including, but not limited to, the adoption of an annual operating budget for all town agencies, electing officers and determining all other matters to be decided by ballot of the voters. The second meeting, which shall be the fall town meeting, shall be held in the last 4 months of the calendar year on a date fixed by by-law; provided, however, that the fall town meeting shall not include the election of officers.

Section 2.2: Presiding Officer

2.2.1 The moderator elected pursuant to section 3.4 shall preside at all sessions of the annual and special town meetings. The moderator at all town meetings shall regulate the proceedings, decide all questions of order and make public declaration of all votes and may exercise such additional powers and duties as may be authorized by law, this charter, by-law or other vote of the town meeting.

2.2.2 The moderator shall appoint a deputy moderator at the spring town meeting, subject to ratification of the town meeting, to serve at any session of an annual or special town meeting in the event of the moderator's absence or disability. The deputy moderator may also temporarily serve when the moderator has a conflict of interest or when the appearance of a conflict of interest arises, as determined by the moderator, with regard to a particular article or matter under consideration.

2.2.3 In the absence of the moderator and the deputy moderator at any session of a town meeting, the town clerk shall open the meeting and preside over the election of an acting moderator; provided, however, that if the moderator, the deputy moderator and the town clerk are absent, the presiding officer shall be determined as provided for by law.

Section 2.3: The Town Report

The select board shall publish an annual town report and make it available not less than 14 days before the spring town meeting; provided, however, that failure to comply with this section shall not prevent the town meeting from proceeding.

Section 2.4: Special Town Meetings

A special town meeting shall be held at the call of a majority of the full select board in order to transact the legislative business of the town in an orderly manner. A special town meeting shall also be held on the petition of not less than 200 voters or 20 per cent of the total number of voters, whichever is less.

Section 2.5: Warrants

Every town meeting shall be called by a warrant issued by the select board that shall state the time and place at which the meeting is to convene and, by separate articles, shall identify the subject matters to be acted upon. The publication of the warrant for every town meeting shall be in accordance with the General Laws and by-laws governing such matters.

Section 2.6: Initiation of Warrant Articles

2.6.1 Initiation - Subject to section 2.6.3, the select board shall receive petitions addressed to it that request the submission of any matter to the town meeting and that are filed by: (i) a department head; (ii) a multiple-member body acting by a majority of its members then in office; (iii) any 10 voters for a session of the annual town meeting; or (iv) any 100 voters for a special town meeting.

2.6.2 Inclusion on the Warrant - Spring and Fall Session of the Town Meeting - When a spring or fall session of the town meeting is to be called, notice shall be given by posting attested copies of the warrant in not less than 2 public places in the town and by publishing notice of the meeting in a local newspaper not less than 14 days before the day appointed for the meeting. The select board shall include in the warrant the subject matter of all petitions received by the board not less than 60 days before the date fixed by by-law for the session of the spring or fall session of the town meeting to convene. Unless specified otherwise in this charter, the content, scheduling and notice requirements for a spring or fall session of the town meeting shall be the same as provided for an annual town meeting pursuant to section 10 of chapter 39 of the General Laws.

2.6.3 Inclusion on the Warrant - Special Town Meeting - If a special town meeting is to be called, notice shall be given by posting attested copies of the warrant in not less than 2 public places in the town and by publishing notice of the meeting in a local newspaper not less than 14 days before the day appointed for the meeting. The select board shall include in the warrant the subject matter of all petitions received by the board not less than 20 days before the day appointed for the meeting. Unless specified otherwise in this charter, the content, scheduling and notice requirements for a special town

meeting shall be the same as provided for a special town meeting pursuant to section 10 of chapter 39 of the General Laws.

Section 2.7: Availability of Town Officials at Town Meetings; Conflicting Meetings

2.7.1 Every chairperson of each multiple-member body and every department head shall attend all sessions of town meetings. If a chairperson of a multiple-member body or department head shall be absent from a town meeting due to illness or other reasonable cause, that person shall designate a deputy to attend the meeting and represent the multiple-member body or department. If a person designated to attend a town meeting under this section is not a voter, the person may, notwithstanding the person’s voter status, address the meeting to fulfill the objectives of this section.

2.7.2 A meeting of a multiple-member body or town agency shall not be convened or be in session during a session of any town meeting except as part of the town meeting.

Section 2.8: Clerk of the Meeting

The town clerk shall serve as clerk of the town meeting, give public notice of all adjourned sessions of the town meeting, record its proceedings and perform such additional duties in connection therewith as may be provided by law, this charter, by-law or town meeting vote.

Section 2.9: Rules of Procedure

The town meeting may, by by-law, establish, amend, revise or repeal rules to govern the conduct of all town meetings.

Section 2.10: General Powers and Duties

The town meeting shall provide for the exercise of all of the powers of the town and for the performance of all duties and obligations imposed upon the town that are not otherwise provided for by law, this charter or by-law.

Section 2.11: Report to the Voters

[There shall be published for every town meeting a copy of the warrant, together with its articles, and a report to the voters that shall contain the explanation and relevant data submitted by the proponents of each article; provided, however, that the town manager may direct that voluminous supporting material necessary for consideration of particular articles be made reasonably available for inspection at public locations before the town meeting in lieu of inclusion in the written report to the voters. The written report for each town meeting shall include: \(i\) the written report of the planning board setting forth its findings and recommendations as to all zoning articles; \(ii\) the written report of the finance committee, which shall set forth its findings, conclusions and recommendations and its reasons therefor regarding all of the monetary articles in the warrant; and \(iii\) with respect to each warrant article, in addition to the reports of the planning board and the finance committee, the written report of a proponent or sponsor of a warrant article and of a multiple-member body or town agency that is required to review, recommend or sponsor the warrant article by law, appointment or otherwise.](#)

~~The report for the town meeting shall also include, as an appendix, the capital improvement plan defined in section 6.6 setting forth the proposed capital outlay program for the ensuing fiscal year for the information and guidance of town meeting. The select board shall have the opportunity to include in the report its conclusions and recommendations, including its reasons therefore, regarding articles in the warrant that relate to its general superintendence over the administration of town affairs.~~

~~There shall be published for every town meeting a copy of the warrant, together with its articles, and a report to the voters that shall contain the explanation and relevant data submitted by the proponents of each article; provided, however, that the town manager may direct that voluminous supporting material necessary for consideration of particular articles be made reasonably available for inspection at public locations before the town meeting in lieu of inclusion in the written report to the voters. The written report for each spring town meeting shall include: (i) the written report of the planning board setting forth its findings and recommendations as to all zoning articles; (ii) the written report of the finance committee, which shall set forth its findings, conclusions and recommendations and its reasons therefor regarding all of the monetary articles in the warrant; and (iii) with respect to each warrant article, in addition to the reports of the planning board and the finance committee, the written report of a proponent or sponsor of a warrant article and of a multiple-member body or town agency that is required to review, recommend or sponsor the warrant article by law, appointment or otherwise.~~

~~The report for the spring town meeting shall also include, as an appendix, the capital improvement plan defined in section 6.6 setting forth a five-year capital outlay program for the information and guidance of town meeting. The select board shall have the opportunity to include in the report its conclusions and recommendations, including its reasons therefor, regarding articles in the warrant that relate to its general superintendence over the administration of town affairs.~~

The report shall be made available to residents of the town by a method determined by the select board not later than 7 days before the date on which the opening session of the spring town meeting is to be held; provided, however, that the failure to make the report available shall not prohibit a town meeting from acting upon any matters set forth in the warrant and shall not affect the validity of the proceedings at a town meeting.

ARTICLE 3: ELECTED OFFICERS

Section 3.1: General

3.1.1 Elective Town Offices - The town offices that the voters shall fill by ballot shall be: (i) the town moderator; (ii) the members of the select board; (iii) the town's component of the Groton-Dunstable Regional School Committee; (iv) the commissioners of trust funds; (v) the elected members of the Groton Housing Authority; (vi) the members of the planning board, public library board of trustees, Groton electric light commission, Groton water commission, Groton sewer commission, park commission, board of health and board of assessors; and (vii) other officers or representatives to regional authorities or districts as may be established by law or by interlocal agreement that shall also be filled by ballot at a town election.

3.1.2 Town Election - The annual election by ballot of elective town officers and voting on any questions required by law to be placed upon the official ballot shall be held on a date fixed by by-law.

3.1.3 Eligibility - A voter shall be eligible to hold an elective town office unless prohibited by law; ~~provided, however, that a select board member shall not simultaneously hold another elected position.~~

3.1.4 Compensation - Elected officers shall receive the compensation for their services that may be appropriated at the spring town meeting for such purpose.

3.1.5 Availability - Notwithstanding a town officer's election by the voters, a town officer under this section shall be subject to the call of the select board or the town manager at all reasonable times for consultation, conference and discussion on any matter related to the officer's respective office. Similarly, multiple-member bodies or other appointees shall be subject to the call of the select board or the town manager at all reasonable times for discussion on any matter related to their respective offices.

3.1.6 Filling of Vacancies

3.1.6.1 Moderator - If there is a failure to elect a town moderator or if a vacancy occurs in the office of town moderator, the select board shall appoint a suitable person to serve until the next town election.

3.1.6.2 Elected Multiple-Member Body - If there is a failure to elect a member of a multiple-member body or if a vacancy occurs in the membership of an elected multiple-member body, the remaining members of the multiple-member body shall give notice of the vacancy to the select board and to the public. The select board and the remaining members of the multiple-member body shall, at least 1 week after notice of the date on which the vote is to be taken, fill the vacancy until the next town election by a joint vote. The affirmative votes of the majority of the persons entitled to vote on the vacancy shall be necessary for the election.

3.1.6.3 Select Board - If there is a failure to elect a select board member or if a vacancy occurs in the membership of the select board, the remaining select board members may call a special election to fill the vacancy or shall call the special election upon the written request of not less than 200 voters.

3.1.7 Recall Provision for Elected Officers

3.1.7.1 Application - An elected officer may be recalled if the recall election occurs more than 6 months before the end of the officer's elective term.

3.1.7.2 Recall Petition - Two per cent of the voters may file with the town clerk an affidavit containing the name of the officer sought to be recalled and a statement of the grounds for the recall. Upon receiving the affidavit, the town clerk shall deliver to the voters making the affidavit copies of petition blanks demanding the recall. The petition blanks shall contain the following heading: "Initiating a recall is a serious process and should not be undertaken lightly." The blanks shall be issued by the town clerk with an official signature and official seal. The blanks shall be dated, addressed to the select board, contain the names of the first 10 signers of the affidavit, the name of the person whose recall is sought and the grounds for recall as stated in the affidavit and demand the election of a successor to the office. A copy of the affidavit and recall petition shall be entered in a record book to be kept in the office of the town clerk. The recall petitions shall be returned and filed with the town clerk not more than 45 days after the date of the filing of the affidavit and shall be signed by not less than 20 per cent of the voters as of the date the affidavit was filed with the town clerk.

The town clerk shall, within 1 business day of receipt of the petitions, submit the petitions to the registrars of voters in the town. The registrars shall, within 5 business days of the submission of the petitions, certify thereon the number of signatures that are names of voters.

3.1.7.3 Recall Election - If the petitions are certified by the registrars of voters to be sufficient, the town clerk shall submit the petitions with the certificate to the select board. Upon receipt of the certificate, the select board shall immediately give written notice of the petition and certificate by certified mail to the officer whose recall is sought. If the officer does not resign the office within 5 days after delivery of the notice, the select board shall immediately order an election to be held on a date fixed by them not less than 64 days nor more than 90 days after the date that the election is called; provided, however, that if another town election is to occur no more than 100 days after the date the election is called, the select board shall postpone the holding of the recall election to the date of the other election. If the officer resigns after a recall election has been ordered, the election shall nevertheless proceed as provided in this section.

3.1.7.4 Nomination of Candidates - An officer whose recall is sought may be a candidate to succeed to the office if the vote on the recall is in the affirmative. The nomination of other candidates, the publication of the warrant for the recall election and the conduct of the recall election shall be in accordance with the laws relating to elections unless otherwise provided in this section.

3.1.7.5 Office Holder - The incumbent shall continue to perform the duties of the office during the recall procedure. If the incumbent is not removed, the incumbent shall continue in the office for the remainder of the unexpired term, subject to recall as before. If recalled at the recall election, the incumbent shall be removed.

3.1.7.6 Ballot Proposition - Ballots used in a recall election shall contain the following propositions in the order indicated:

Shall the town of Groton recall (name of officer) Yes No

Below the propositions shall appear the word "Candidates", the directions to the voters required by section 42 of chapter 54 of the General Laws and, below the directions, the names of candidates nominated in accordance with the laws relating to elections. If a majority of the votes cast on the question of recall is in the affirmative, the candidate receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected. If a majority of the votes on the recall question is in the negative, the ballots for the candidates shall not be counted.

3.1.7.7 Repeat of Recall Election - A recall shall not be filed against an officer subjected to a recall election and not recalled thereby until not less than 6 months after the election at which the recall was submitted to the voters.

3.1.7.8 Office Holder Recalled - A person who has been recalled from an office or who has resigned from an office while recall proceedings were pending against the person shall not be appointed to a town office within 2 years after the date of the recall vote or resignation.

Section 3.2: Select Board

3.2.1 Composition, Term of Office - There shall be a select board consisting of 5 members elected for terms of 3 years each, arranged so that the terms of office of as nearly an equal number of members as possible shall expire each year. A select board member shall not hold another position of the town that is compensated and eligible for medical benefits during the member's term of office.

3.2.2 Powers and Duties - The executive powers of the town shall be vested in the select board, which shall be the chief executive office of the town. The select board shall possess all of the executive powers that a select board may possess and exercise, except those powers and duties assigned by this charter, by-law or town meeting vote to the town manager. The select board shall:

- (i) serve as the principal goal-setting and policy-making town agency for matters within its statutory authority and for those matters for which the town meeting has directed the board to act;
- (ii) be responsible for the formulation and promulgation of policy to be followed by all town agencies serving under it;
- (iii) in conjunction with other elected officers and multiple-member bodies, develop and promulgate policy guidelines designed to bring all town agencies into harmony;
- (iv) award and execute all contracts for services and supplies for all departments and agencies of the town, other than the Groton-Dunstable Regional School Committee; provided, however, that the select board, at its sole discretion, may delegate this authority to any department head or agency by a vote of the board at a posted meeting; and

(v) One Member of the Select Board and the Town Manager shall sign all payroll and expense warrants.
~~sign all payroll and expense warrants; provided, however, that the select board, at its sole discretion, may delegate this authority for a period of not more than 30 days to a select board member and the town manager or a select board member and the acting town manager by a vote of the board at a posted meeting.~~

3.2.3 Licensing Authority - The select board shall be the licensing board of the town and may issue licenses, make reasonable rules and regulations regarding the issuance of licenses and attach to a license the conditions and restrictions that it deems to be in the public interest; provided, however, that such rules, regulations, conditions and restrictions shall not be incompatible with applicable law. The select board shall enforce the laws relating to all businesses for which it issues licenses. The select board may delegate its licensing authority unless specifically prohibited by law.

3.2.4 Appointing Authority - The select board shall appoint the town manager, town counsel, a zoning board of appeals, board of registrars, conservation commission, council on aging, housing partnership, local cultural council and other committees as required by law, by-law or town meeting vote.
~~The select board shall appoint the town manager, town counsel, a zoning board of appeals and a board of registrars. The select board shall appoint a police chief, fire chief and town clerk consistent with clause (v) of section 4.2; provided, however, that the police chief shall serve under section 97A of chapter 41 of the General Laws and the fire chief shall serve under section 42 of chapter 48 of the General Laws. The select board shall appoint a conservation commission, council on aging, housing partnership, local cultural council and other committees as required by law, by-law or town meeting vote. [Amended by Chapter 41 of the Acts of 2022]~~

3.2.5 Investigations - The select board may investigate the affairs of the town and the conduct of any town agency, including any doubtful claims against the town. Copies of the full text of the report on the results of any such investigation shall be placed on file in the office of the select board, the office of the

town clerk and the public library and a report summarizing the results of the investigation shall be printed in the next annual town report.

3.2.6 Day to Day Business - Except in the case of an emergency, this section shall not authorize a select board member or a majority of its members to become involved in the day-to- day administration of a town board, department or agency.

Section 3.3: Regional School Committee

3.3.1 Composition, Term of Office - The Groton-Dunstable Regional School District provides public education, pre- kindergarten to high school, inclusive, and related services to the towns of Groton and Dunstable under the terms of a regional agreement between the towns. Pursuant to the regional agreement, there is a Groton- Dunstable Regional School Committee consisting of 7 members elected for 3- year terms, the terms being arranged so that the terms of office of as nearly an equal number of members as possible shall expire each year. The number of members elected by each town is governed by the terms of the regional agreement, as it may be amended.

3.3.2 Powers and Duties - The Groton-Dunstable Regional School Committee shall have all of the powers and duties that are given to regional school committees under the constitution, laws and regulations of the commonwealth and such additional powers and duties as may be authorized by the regional agreement, by-law or other vote of the town meetings of both the towns of Groton and Dunstable.

Section 3.4: Town Moderator

3.4.1 Term of Office - There shall be a moderator elected for a 3-year term.

3.4.2 Powers and Duties - The moderator shall be the presiding officer of the town meeting, pursuant to section 2.2, and regulate its proceeding and perform other duties as may be provided by law, this charter, by-law or town meeting vote.

3.4.3 Appointments - The moderator shall make appointments provided for by law, this charter or by-law.

3.4.4 Deputy Moderator - At the opening of the spring town meeting, the moderator shall appoint a voter to serve as deputy moderator pursuant to section 2.2.

Section 3.5: Groton Housing Authority

3.5.1 Composition, Term of Office - There shall be a Groton Housing Authority that shall have the membership and terms of office prescribed in the General Laws.

3.5.2 Powers and Duties - The Groton Housing Authority shall conduct studies of the housing needs of the community and shall provide programs to make available housing for low- income families and elderly persons. The Groton Housing Authority shall have such other powers and duties as are assigned to housing authorities by law.

Section 3.6: Planning Board

3.6.1 Composition, Term of Office - There shall be a planning board that shall consist of 7 members, each elected for a 3-year term. The terms shall be arranged so that the terms of as nearly an equal number of members as possible shall expire each year.

3.6.2 Powers and Duties - The planning board shall have the powers and duties given to planning boards under the constitution and laws of the commonwealth and such additional powers and duties as may be authorized by this charter, by-law or town meeting vote.

Section 3.7: Groton Electric Light Commission

3.7.1 Composition, Term of Office - There shall be a Groton electric light commission that shall consist of 3 members, each serving for a 3-year term. The terms shall be arranged that the term of 1 member shall expire each year.

3.7.2 Powers and Duties - The Groton electric light commission shall set the policy direction of the Groton electric light department, which provides electric power to the town, consistent with chapter 164 of the General Laws; provided, however, that if a provision of this charter shall conflict with said chapter 164, said chapter 164 shall govern.

Section 3.8: Library Board of Trustees

3.8.1 Composition, Term of Office - There shall be a board of trustees of the public library that shall consist of 6 members, each serving for a 3-year term. The terms shall be arranged so that the terms of 2 members shall expire each year.

3.8.2 Powers and Duties - The trustees of the public library shall establish written policies governing library activities and services, engage in ongoing planning that assesses the needs and the role of the library in the community, ensure that the library meets the community's needs, work on preparation of the annual library budget and its adoption by the town, monitor and oversee maintenance of the buildings and grounds and regularly review facility needs, hire and evaluate the library director and work with the human resources director on job classifications for all staff, promote the library and act as library advocates in the community, study and support legislation that will benefit the library and the larger community and have such other powers and duties as provided for by law, this charter and by-law.

3.8.3 Appointments - The trustees of the public library shall appoint the library director and such other appointments as provided for by law, this charter or by-law.

Section 3.9: Board of Assessors

[Section 3.9 renumbered from Section 3.10 by Chapter 41 of the Acts of 2022]

3.9.1 Composition, Term of Office and Eligibility for Office - There shall be a board of assessors that shall consist of 3 members elected for 3-year terms. An employee in the assessors' office shall not simultaneously hold an elected position as a member of the board of assessors.

3.9.2 Powers and Duties - The board of assessors shall have the powers and duties given to boards of assessors under the constitution and laws of the commonwealth and directives of the commissioner of

revenue and such additional powers and duties as may be authorized by this charter, by-law or town meeting vote that are not in conflict with laws of the commonwealth and regulations and directives of the department of revenue except as otherwise provided in this charter.

Section 3.10: Other Elected Officers

[Section 3.10 renumbered from Section 3.11 by Chapter 41 of the Acts of 2022]

3.10.1 Powers and Duties - All other elected officers shall have the powers and duties that have been conferred upon their offices by law, this charter, by-law or town meeting vote.

ARTICLE 4: TOWN MANAGER

Section 4.1: Appointment, Qualifications and Review Procedure

4.1.1 The select board shall, by an affirmative vote of the majority of the full board, appoint or reappoint a town manager for a term of not more than 3 years and fix the compensation of the town manager within the amount annually appropriated for that purpose. If a vacancy shall occur in the office of town manager, the select board shall appoint a town manager screening committee to identify qualified candidates for the position. The office of the town manager shall not be subject to the town's salary administration plan. The town manager shall be appointed solely on the basis of the town manager's executive and administrative qualifications. The town manager shall be a professionally qualified person of proven ability, especially fitted by education, training and previous experience to perform the duties of the office. The town manager shall not have served in an elective office in the town government for at least 1 year before being appointed. The town may establish additional qualifications for the town manager by by-law as necessary or appropriate.

4.1.2 The position of town manager shall be a full-time position. The town manager shall devote the town manager's best efforts to the office and shall not hold another public office, elective or appointive, or engage in any business or occupation during the town manager's term unless the action is fully disclosed and approved by the select board in advance and in writing.

4.1.3 The select board shall provide for an annual review of the job performance of the town manager that shall, at least in summary form, be a public record in accordance with the personnel by-laws or accepted evaluation process.

Section 4.2: Powers and Duties

The town manager shall be the chief administrator of the town and shall be responsible to the select board for the proper administration of all town affairs placed in the town manager's charge by this charter. The powers and duties of the town manager shall include, but not be limited to:

(i) ~~(i) managing, supervising, and being responsible for the efficient and coordinated administration of all town functions as may be authorized by this Charter, by-law, town meeting vote or the select board, including all appointed officials, employees, department heads and their respective departments~~ managing, supervising and being responsible for the efficient and coordinated administration of all town functions under the town manager's control as may be authorized by this charter, by-law, town meeting vote or the select board, including all department heads and their respective departments;

(ii) _____ unless otherwise required by law, this charter or by-law, managing and coordinating the administrative activities of all town agencies; provided, however, that elected officers or their representatives shall be required to meet with the town manager at reasonable times to effect coordination and cooperation among all town agencies;

~~(iii) _____ appointing and removing a police chief, fire chief and town clerk pursuant to the policy established by the select board; provided, however, that the police chief shall serve under section 97A of chapter 41 of the General Laws and the fire chief shall serve under section 42 of chapter 48 of the General Laws, and appointing and removing department heads, officers and subordinates and employees and other appointed members of town government for whom no other method of appointment or removal is provided in this charter or by-law; provided, however, that an appointment made by the town manager shall be confirmed by the select board not more than 15 days after the date on which the town manager files notice of the action with the select board; and provided further, that failure by the select board to confirm an appointment in that 15-day period shall constitute rejection of the appointment; appointing and removing department heads, other employees and paid members of town government for whom another method of appointment or removal is not provided in this charter or by-law; provided, however, that an appointment made by the town manager shall be confirmed by the select board not more than 15 days after the date on which the town manager files notice of the action with the select board; and provided further, that failure by the select board to confirm an appointment in that 15-day period shall constitute rejection of the appointment;~~

~~(iv) _____ nominating for appointment or removal volunteer members of town government for whom another method of appointment or removal is not provided for in this charter or by-law; provided, however, that a nomination for appointment or removal made by the town manager shall be confirmed by the select board not more than 15 days after the date on which the town manager files notice of the action with the select board; and provided further, that failure by the select board to confirm a nomination in not more than 15 days shall constitute rejection of the nomination;~~

~~(v) _____ if a vacancy occurs in the office of police chief, fire chief or town clerk, selecting and presenting not less than 2 qualified candidates to the select board for appointment by the board to the office pursuant to section 3-2-4; **[Amended by Chapter 41 of the Acts of 2022]**~~

~~(viiv) _____ acting as a negotiator for all collective bargaining agreements to which the select board is a party, subject to ratification by the select board;~~

(vii) conducting or reviewing annual performance evaluations of all employees subject to the town manager's or the select board's appointment and consulting with elected and appointed boards to contribute to the preparation of the evaluations of department heads associated with the boards;

(viii) fixing the compensation of all employees appointed by the town manager within the limits established by the overall approved budget, the personnel by-laws, the town's wage and classification schedule and collective bargaining or other agreements;

~~(xvii)~~ attending all regular and special meetings of the select board unless excused at the town manager's request and having a voice, but not a vote, in all discussions;

(xviii) attending all sessions of the town meeting and answering all questions directed to the town manager that are related to the office of the town manager or concerning which the town manager possesses the relevant information;

(xix) assuring that all laws, this charter, by-laws, town meeting votes and directives of the select board that require enforcement by the town manager or employees subject to the town manager's direction and supervision are faithfully carried out;

(xii) preparing and submitting annual operating budgets and capital improvement programs pursuant to article 6;

(xiii) coordinating the preparation of the town's annual report;

(xiv) overseeing the preservation, management and administration of all town records so as to facilitate access to them; and

(xv) performing such duties as necessary or as may be assigned by this charter, by-law, town meeting vote or the select board.

Section 4.3: Removal and Suspension

4.3.1 The select board may, by the affirmative vote of 4 of its members, terminate and remove or suspend the town manager from office in accordance with the procedure under this section.

4.3.1.1 The select board shall adopt a preliminary resolution of removal which shall state the reason for removal, by the affirmative vote of 4 members. The preliminary resolution may provide for the suspension of the town manager for not more than 45 days. A copy of the preliminary resolution shall be delivered to the town manager not more than 48 hours after its adoption.

4.3.1.2 Not more than 7 days after receipt of the preliminary resolution, the town manager may request a public hearing by filing a written request for it with the select board. The hearing shall be held at a meeting of the select board not more than 20 days, but not less than 3 days, after the request has been filed. The town manager may file a written statement with the select board responding to the reason stated in the preliminary resolution of removal; provided, however, that the statement shall be received at the office of the select board more than 48 hours before the public hearing.

4.3.1.3 If the town manager has not requested a hearing pursuant to paragraph 4.3.1.2, the select board may, by the affirmative vote of 4 of its members, adopt a final resolution of removal not less than 10 days, but not more than 21 days, after the date of delivery of a copy of the preliminary resolution to the town manager. If the town manager has requested a public hearing pursuant to paragraph 4.3.1.2, the select board may, by the affirmative vote of 4 of its members, adopt a final resolution of removal not more than 21 days after the close of the hearing unless the parties agree to a longer period. Failure to adopt a final resolution of removal within the time allowed in this section shall nullify the preliminary resolution of removal and the town manager shall, at the expiration of the time, resume the duties of the office.

4.3.1.4 Any action by the select board to terminate and remove or suspend the town manager shall be conducted pursuant to sections 18 to 25, inclusive, of chapter 30A of the General Laws.

4.3.2 The action of the select board in terminating and removing or suspending the town manager shall be final.

Section 4.4: Vacancy in the Office of the Town Manager

4.4.1 Permanent Vacancy - The select board shall fill a permanent vacancy in the office of the town manager pursuant to section 4.1.1 as soon as possible after a vacancy occurs. Pending the appointment of a town manager or the filling of a vacancy in the office of the town manager, the select board shall, within 14 days, appoint a person capable of temporarily performing the duties of the town manager until a permanent replacement is appointed.

4.4.2 Temporary Absence or Disability - The town manager may designate, by letter filed with the town clerk and select board, a capable person to perform the duties of town manager during a temporary absence or disability for a period of not less than 7 days. If the town manager fails to make such a designation or if the person so designated is unable to serve, the select board may designate some other capable person to perform the duties of the town manager. If the absence or disability lasts more than 30 days, a designation by the town manager shall be subject to approval by the select board.

4.4.3 Powers and Duties - The powers and duties of the acting town manager under paragraphs 4.4.1 and 4.4.2 shall be limited to matters not permitting of delay and shall include authority to make temporary, emergency appointments or designations to town offices or employment; provided, however, that an acting town manager shall not make permanent appointments or designations unless authorized by the select board.

Section 4.5: Screening Committee

4.5.1 If a vacancy shall occur in the office of town manager, a screening committee shall be established to solicit, receive and evaluate applications for the position of town manager. The screening committee shall consist of 7 persons, 3 of whom shall be designated by the select board, of which only 1 may be a select board member, 2 of whom shall be designated by the finance committee, of which only 1 may be a member of the finance committee, and 2 of whom shall be designated by the town moderator. A person chosen by an appointing authority may be a member of the appointing authority's agency; provided, however, that there shall not be more than 1 select board member and not more than 1 member of the finance committee on the screening committee. **[Amended by Chapter 41 of the Acts of 2022]**

4.5.2 Not more than 21 days after the notice of the vacancy or pending vacancy in the office of town manager, the town clerk shall call and convene a meeting of the screening committee. The screening committee shall meet to organize and plan a process to advertise the vacancy or pending vacancy and to solicit by other means candidates for the office. The committee shall proceed to meet, notwithstanding the failure of any town appointing authority to designate a representative to it.

4.5.3 The screening committee shall review all applications that are received by it, screen all such applicants by checking and verifying work records and other credentials and provide for interviews to be conducted with the number of candidates as it deems necessary, desirable or expedient.

4.5.4 Not more than 90 days after the date on which the screening committee meets to organize, the committee shall submit to the select board the names of not less than 3 persons and not more than 5 persons that the screening committee believes to be best suited to perform the duties of the town manager. The select board shall, not more than 60 days after the date of receipt of the list of nominees, choose 1 candidate from the list to fill the position of town manager or reject the nominees and direct that the committee resume its search.

4.5.5 Upon the appointment of a town manager, the screening committee shall be discharged.

ARTICLE 5: ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION

Section 5.1: Organization of Town Agencies

The organization of the town into operating agencies for the provision of services and administration of government may be accomplished by any method consistent with law and this charter, including the adoption of by-laws, appropriation of funds or adoption of rules and regulations by appropriate entities. The town manager may, with the approval of the select board and consistent with law and this charter, establish, reorganize, consolidate or abolish any department or position under the town manager's direction and supervision.

Section 5.2: Merit Principle

All appointments and promotions of employees shall be made solely on the basis of merit and fitness demonstrated by examination or other evidence of competency and suitability.

Section 5.3: Department of Finance

5.3.1 There shall be a department of finance in the town that shall report to the town manager. There shall be within the department an appointed town accountant, an appointed treasurer-collector and an appointed principal ~~assistant~~-assessor. The department shall be responsible for the performance of all the fiscal and financial activities of the town. The town manager shall serve as the finance director; provided, however, that the town manager may, at the town manager's discretion, appoint another person to serve as the finance director. The appointment shall be subject to confirmation by the select board in accordance with ~~clause subsection~~ (iii) of section 4.2.

5.3.2 The town manager and the department of finance shall assume all of the powers, duties and responsibilities related to municipal finance activities and the coordination of those activities with the activities of all other town agencies. The department of finance shall have such additional powers, duties and responsibilities with respect to municipal finance as the town may provide by by-law.

5.3.3 The department of finance shall assure that complete and full records of the financial and administrative activities of the town are maintained and shall render written reports, which shall include a full accounting of all town administrative and financial operations, to the select board and the finance committee at least once each calendar quarter. The quarterly reports shall be rendered not more than 30 days after the end of the calendar quarter to which they apply and shall be made available to the public in accordance with the requirements of section 10 of chapter 66 of the General Laws. Additional reports shall be rendered to the select board at the board's request.

5.3.4 The town manager and the department of finance shall collaborate with the finance committee to prepare, maintain and present to the select board and the town meeting a 5- year financial plan for the town.

5.3.5 Town Accountant - The town accountant shall be appointed by the town manager for a term of not more than 3 years, subject to confirmation by the select board pursuant to ~~clause-subsection~~ (iii) of section 4.2. The town accountant shall have all of the powers and duties vested in the office of town accountant by law, this charter, by-law or town meeting vote.

5.3.6 Treasurer-Collector - The treasurer-collector shall be appointed by the town manager for a term of not more than 3 years, subject to confirmation by the select board pursuant to ~~clause-subsection~~ (iii) of section 4.2. The treasurer- collector shall have all the powers and duties vested in the office of treasurer-collector by law, this charter, by-law or town meeting vote.

5.3.7 Principal ~~Assistant~~ Assessor - The principal ~~assistant~~ assessor shall be appointed by the town manager for a term of not more than 3 years, subject to confirmation by the select board pursuant to subsection (iii) of section 4.2. The principal assistant assessor shall have all of the powers and duties vested in the office of principal assistant assessor by this charter, by-law or town meeting vote and in the office of assistant assessor by law.

Section 5.4: Department of Public Works

5.4.1 There shall be a department of public works that shall be under the direction of a director. The director shall be appointed by the town manager, subject to confirmation by the select board pursuant to ~~clause-subsection~~ (iii) of section 4.2. The director shall serve as and perform the duties of a highway surveyor as set forth in the General Laws.

5.4.2 The principal functions of the department of public works shall include:

- (i) construction, maintenance, repair and cleaning of town roads, sidewalks, storm drains, bridges, dikes and other public way related structures;
- (ii) maintenance, repair and cleaning of all buildings owned or leased by the town, except those of the regional school district;
- (iii) maintenance of the old cemetery, parks, parking areas and recreational and beach facilities, except those of the regional school district;
- (iv) snow removal, including the salting and sanding of roads, except those of the regional school district;
- (v) supervision of the collection and disposal of garbage and other refuse and the maintenance and operation of all facilities for the disposal of the same;
- (vi) supervision, care and replacement of trees;
- (vii) providing for, or causing to be provided for, the maintenance and repair of certain town-owned vehicles; and

(viii) such other functions as may be prescribed by the town manager.

5.4.3 Powers and Duties - The department of public works shall work in close coordination with the necessary town boards and departments to enable the effective and efficient performance of its duties pursuant to the General Laws, this charter, the by-laws or by vote of the town meeting.

Section 5.5: Information Technology

There shall be a department of information technology that shall plan, coordinate and maintain the town's information assets.

~~Section 5.6: Personnel Board~~

~~5.6.1 Composition, Term of Office - There shall be a personnel board that shall consist of 3 members appointed by the select board. Members shall serve for 3-year terms; provided, however, that the terms shall be arranged in such a manner that the term of office of 1 member shall expire each year.~~

~~5.6.2 Powers and Duties - The personnel board shall function as an advisory board to the human resources director, town manager and select board in the management of human resources for the town.~~

ARTICLE 6: FINANCE AND FISCAL PROCEDURES

Section 6.1: Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the town shall begin on July 1 and shall end on June 30 unless another period is required by the General Laws.

Section 6.2: Finance Committee

6.2.1 Composition, Term of Office - There shall be a finance committee that shall consist of 7 voters appointed by a 3-person committee that shall consist of the chair of the select board, the chair of the finance committee and the town moderator; provided, however, that if the chair of the finance committee is being considered for reappointment, the finance committee shall select another member who is not being considered for reappointment. Members of the finance committee shall serve 3-year terms; provided, however, that the terms shall be so arranged that the terms of office of as nearly an equal number of members as possible shall expire each year. The finance committee shall appoint a chair and a deputy chair to run meetings and present the finance committee's recommendations during the town budget process.

6.2.2 Roles and Responsibilities

The finance committee shall:

- (i) serve as the advisors to the town meeting, the select board, the town manager and the department of finance on all matters pertaining to the budget, including budgeting strategy and goals and the balancing of revenues and expenditures;
- (ii) together with the select board, town manager and department of finance, develop a budget strategy and set financial goals for each fiscal year;
- (iii) present the finance committee's annual budget at the spring town meeting;
- (iv) consult with the select board and the town manager prior to collective bargaining to develop a strategy aligning with the town's long-term budgetary strategy and goals;
- (v) review the preliminary results of collective bargaining to ensure alignment with long-term budgetary strategy and goals; and
- (vi) perform any other duties as may be required by law.

Section 6.3: Annual Review of Financial Policies

Annually, the select board and the finance committee shall review and update the town's overall financial management policy. When reviewing and updating the policy, the select board and the finance committee shall seek input from the town manager, the department of finance and other advisors.

Section 6.4: The Budget

6.4.1 Budget Process - The select board, the town manager, the department of finance and the finance committee shall meet annually not later than ~~October 31~~ November 30 to determine the budgetary goals for the subsequent fiscal year. The town manager shall, after that meeting but not later than January 31, submit to the finance committee and the select board a proposed budget for the next fiscal year that shall be accompanied by a budget message, a summary and supporting documents that follow the agreed-upon budget goals. The proposed budget shall be balanced.

6.4.2 Proposed Budget - The proposed budget shall provide a complete financial plan for all town funds and activities for the ensuing fiscal year. Unless otherwise required by the General Laws, the proposed budget shall be in the form that the town manager, the select board and the finance committee shall deem desirable. In the presentation of the proposed budget, the town manager shall furnish information in a complete, clear and concise manner and in accordance with best practices of financial reporting and control. The proposed budget shall show, in detail, all estimated income from the proposed property tax levy and all other sources and all proposed expenditures, including debt service, for the following year. The proposed budget shall be arranged to show the actual and estimated income and expenditures for the previous, current and ensuing fiscal years and shall indicate in separate sections:

- (i) proposed expenditures for current operations during the ensuing fiscal year, detailed by town agency and position in terms of work programs, and the proposed method for financing each such expenditure; and

(ii) proposed capital expenditures during the ensuing fiscal year, detailed by town agency, and the proposed method for financing each such capital expenditure.

6.4.3 Budget Summary - The summary of the proposed budget shall identify deviations from the current operating budget and outline the reasons for these changes. The town manager shall cause a summary of the operating budget to be published in a local newspaper and placed on the town's website contemporaneously with the submission to the finance committee. The publication shall indicate the times and places at which copies of the proposed budget with the accompanying documentation shall be available for examination by the public.

6.4.4 Budget Message - The budget message of the town manager shall: (i) explain the budget for all town agencies, both in fiscal terms and in terms of work programs; (ii) outline proposed financial policies of the town for the ensuing fiscal year; (iii) describe important features of the budget; (iv) indicate any major variations from the current year in financial policies, expenditures and revenues, together with the reasons for such changes; (v) summarize the town's debt position; and (vi) include any other material that the town manager deems desirable or that the select board may reasonably require.

Section 6.5: Action on the Budget

6.5.1 The finance committee shall, upon receipt of the proposed budget from the town manager, consider in public meetings detailed expenditures for each town department and agency and may confer with representatives of each town agency in connection with the committee's review and consideration. The finance committee may require the town manager or any town agency to furnish the committee with such additional information as the committee may deem necessary to assist the committee in its review and consideration of the proposed budget.

Not less than 14 days before the opening of the spring town meeting, the finance committee shall file with the town clerk a report containing the committee's proposed budget and comments or recommendations regarding differences between the committee's proposed budget and the proposed budget submitted by the town manager. Not less than 14 days before the opening of the spring town meeting the report shall be made available to voters of the town by publication on the town's website and by leaving copies of the report in not less than 2 public places in the town. Copies of the report shall be made available to voters at the opening of the spring town meeting. The failure to file the report with the town clerk in a timely manner or to publicize the report by posting on the town's website or in 2 public places in the town shall not prohibit the town meeting from voting on the budget and shall not affect the validity of any vote taken on the budget at town meeting.

~~The finance committee shall, upon receipt of the proposed budget from the town manager, consider in public meetings detailed expenditures for each town department and agency and may confer with representatives of each town agency in connection with the committee's review and consideration. The finance committee may require the town manager or any town agency to furnish the committee with such additional information as the committee may deem necessary to assist the committee in its review and consideration of the proposed budget.~~

~~Not less than 14 days before the opening of the spring town meeting, the finance committee shall file with the town clerk a report containing the committee's proposed budget and comments or recommendations regarding differences between the committee's proposed budget and the proposed budget submitted by the town manager. Not less than 14 days before the opening of the spring town meeting the report shall be made available to voters of the town by publication on the town's website and by leaving copies of the report in not less than 3 public places in the town. Copies of the report shall be made available to voters at~~

~~the opening of the spring town meeting. The failure to file the report with the town clerk in a timely manner or to publicize the report by posting on the town's website or in 3 public places in the town shall not prohibit the town meeting from voting on the budget and shall not affect the validity of any vote taken on the budget at town meeting.~~

6.5.2 The finance committee's proposed budget shall be presented to the town meeting by motion made by the committee; provided, however, the committee shall also present its comments and recommendations with respect to the budget. The town manager or the select board, or both, shall present their comments and recommendations with respect to the budget, if any, at the town meeting. The budget shall be voted upon in accordance with the by-laws.

Section 6.6: Capital Improvement Plan

The town manager shall annually submit a capital improvement plan to the select board and the finance committee not later than ~~December 31~~ January 31. The plan shall include: (i) a clear, concise and general summary of its contents; (ii) a list of all capital improvements proposed to be undertaken during the ensuing 5 years along with supporting information as to the need for each capital improvement; (iii) cost estimates, methods of financing and recommended time schedules for each improvement; and (iv) the estimated annual cost of operating and maintaining each facility and piece of major equipment involved.

The information in the plan shall be revised annually by the town manager with regard to the capital improvements still pending or in the process of being acquired, improved or constructed.

Section 6.7: Audits

The select board shall provide annually for an independent audit of all financial books and records of the town and whenever it deems an audit of the whole town or of any particular town agency to be necessary. An audit of the town's financial books and records shall be conducted by a certified public accountant or a firm of certified public accountants; provided, however, that the accountant or firm shall not have a direct or indirect interest in the affairs of the town.

Section 6.8: Transparency of Financial Holdings

Not later than 90 days after the end of each fiscal year, the town accountant shall prepare a summary of all town funds in accordance with customary financial reporting. The summary shall include a snapshot balance as of the first day of the fiscal year, a summary of additions and deletions during the preceding 12 months and a final year-end balance. The information in the summary shall be provided to the town manager and the town manager shall disseminate the information to the finance committee and the select board. The information shall be made available to members of the public upon request and on the town's website.

ARTICLE 7: GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 7.1: Charter Changes

This charter may be replaced, revised or amended in accordance with any procedures made available under the constitution and laws of the commonwealth.

Section 7.2: Severability

The provisions of this charter shall be severable. If a provision of this charter is held to be invalid, the other provisions shall remain in full force and effect and shall not be affected by the invalidity. If the application of any provision of this charter to a person or circumstance is held to be invalid, the application of any such provision to any other person or circumstances shall not be affected thereby.

Section 7.3: Specific Provisions to Prevail

To the extent that a specific provision of this charter shall conflict with a provision expressed in general terms, the specific provision shall prevail.

Section 7.4: Number and Gender

Words importing the singular number may extend and be applied to several persons or things. Words importing the plural number may include the singular. Words importing the feminine or masculine gender shall include any gender.

Section 7.5: Rules and Regulations

A copy of all rules and regulations adopted by a town agency shall be filed in the office of the town clerk and the rule or regulation shall become effective on the date of such filing unless otherwise provided for by law or by-law. Copies of all such rules and regulations shall be made available for review by any person upon request pursuant to chapter 66 of the General Laws.

Section 7.6: Periodic Charter Review

Not less than once in every 10-year period after the effective date of this charter, a charter review committee shall, by an affirmative vote of the majority of the full select board, be established to review this charter and report its recommendations to an annual town meeting concerning any proposed amendments that the committee may determine to be necessary or desirable. The charter review committee shall consist of 7 members, 3 of whom shall be appointed by the select board, 2 of whom shall be appointed by the finance committee, 1 of whom shall be appointed by the Groton-Dunstable Regional District school committee and 1 of whom shall be appointed by the town moderator. An appointed person may be a member of the agency from which they are appointed; provided, however, that the charter review committee shall not include more than 1 select board member, more than 1 member of the finance committee or more than 1 member of the Groton-Dunstable Regional School District school committee. The charter review committee shall meet to organize immediately after the full charter review committee has been appointed. The charter review committee shall hold a public hearing not more than 60 days after the date on which it meets to organize and shall hold at least 1 additional public hearing before filing its final report.

Section 7.7: Removals

7.7.1 Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, an appointed official, appointed member of a multiple-member body or employee of the town not covered by the terms of a collective bargaining or other agreement addressing removal and, whether appointed for a fixed or an indefinite term, may be removed from office by the appointing authority.

7.7.2 When removing any such official, appointed member of a multiple-member body or employee of the town, the appointing authority shall act in accordance with the town's personnel by-laws or rules and regulations.

Section 7.8: Loss of Office

A person appointed to serve as a member of a multiple-member body may be removed from office by the appointing authority if the person does not take the person's oath of office at the beginning of the current appointment or if the person exhibits excessive absences from the properly-scheduled meetings of the multiple-member body.

Section 7.9: Notice of Vacancies

If a vacancy occurs in a town office, position or position of employment or, whenever by reason of a pending retirement or expiration of a fixed term, a vacancy can be anticipated, the appointing authority shall cause public notice of the vacancy to be posted on the town bulletin board for not less than 10 days. The notice shall contain a description of the duties of the office, position or position of employment and a listing of the necessary or desirable qualifications to fill the office, position or position of employment. A permanent appointment to fill the office, position or position of employment shall not be effective until 14 days after the date the notice was posted to permit reasonable consideration of all applicants. This section shall not apply to positions governed by a collective bargaining or other agreement.

Section 7.10: Waiver of Administrative Fees

Administrative fees, fines and penalties that may be charged by a town department shall not be waived unless the waiver is authorized by a written policy that is available to the public and adopted by that town department, official or board. A policy may be made on an individual basis or as part of a policy decision of uniform applicability.

ARTICLE 8: TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

Section 8.1: Continuation of Government

All persons appointed or elected to positions at town agencies shall continue to perform their duties until they are reappointed or reelected, successors to their respective positions are duly appointed or elected or their duties have been transferred and assumed by another town agency in accordance with this charter.

Section 8.2: Continuation of Administrative Personnel

A person holding a town office or a position in the administrative service of the town or a person holding full-time employment under the town shall retain that person's office, position or position of employment and shall continue to perform the duties of that person's office, position or position of employment until provision shall have been made for the performance of those duties by another person or agency; provided, however, that a person in the permanent full-time service of the town shall not forfeit their pay grade or time in the service of the town as a result of the adoption of this charter; provided further, that this section shall not provide a person holding an administrative office or position or a person serving in the employment of the town on the effective date of this charter with any greater rights or privileges with regard to that person's continued service or employment with the town than that person had before the effective date of this charter. Nothing in this paragraph shall impair the rights of any person under an individual employment contract or collective bargaining agreement.

Section 8.3: Transfer of Records and Property

All records, property and equipment of an office, department or agency or part thereof, the powers and duties of which are assigned in whole or in part to another office or agency, shall be transferred immediately to the office, department or agency to which the powers and duties are assigned.

APPENDIX D

DEMOLITION DELAY BYLAW WITH PROPOSED AMENDMENTS USING TRACK CHANGES

§ 125-1. Intent and purpose.

- A. The Demolition Delay Bylaw is enacted for the purpose of preserving and protecting significant buildings within the Town of Groton. ~~which are outside Local Historic Districts.~~ Such buildings reflect distinctive features of the architectural, cultural, economic, political or social history of the Town, and their preservation protects these historic architectural assets which contribute to the overall culture of the community.
- B. The intent of the bylaw is to provide an opportunity to develop preservation solutions for distinctive and preserved historic properties threatened with demolition. The bylaw is intended to encourage owners and townspeople, with assistance from the Groton Historical Commission, to seek out persons who might be willing to purchase, preserve, rehabilitate or restore such buildings rather than demolish them, and to limit the detrimental effect of demolition on the historical architectural resources of the Town. To achieve these purposes, the Groton Historical Commission is empowered to advise the Building Inspector with respect to the issuance of permits for demolition of significant buildings, and, where appropriate and consistent with the intent and purpose of this chapter, to allow demolition under conditions designed to minimize the loss of distinctive features of significant buildings. The issuance of demolition permits is regulated as provided by this bylaw.

§ 125-2. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

APPLICANT — Any person or persons who is either the owner or legally representing the owner and applying for a permit to demolish any building or structure. The applicant may not apply for a permit to demolish any building or structure on behalf of a future owner. The process outlined in this Bylaw resets upon the transfer of ownership of a property.

BUILDING — A structure enclosed within exterior walls or firewalls, built, erected and framed of a combination of any materials to form a structure for the shelter of persons, animals or property.

BUILDING INSPECTOR — The Town of Groton Building Commissioner, who is charged with the administration and enforcement of the State Building Code, 780 CMR, and is authorized to issue demolition permits.

COMMISSION — The Groton Historical Commission, which is charged with the identification, documentation and preservation of the historical resources of Groton.

DEMOLITION — Any act of pulling down, destroying, removing, razing or moving a building or commencing the work of moving or of total or substantial destruction with the intent of

completing the same. Substantial demolition is defined as irreparably removing or altering any historically significant feature of a structure, or removing twenty-five (25) percent of the volume of the structure or twenty-five (25) percent of the roof structure. This includes rebuilding any portion of a structure in which more than fifty (50) percent of the materials are replaced.

DEMOLITION PERMIT — The permit issued by the Building Inspector as required by the State Building Code for the demolition, substantial demolition or removal of a building.

HISTORICALLY OR ARCHITECTURALLY SIGNIFICANT BUILDING — Any building which, in whole or in part, is at least 75 years old, or is of unknown age and:

- A. Is listed on, or is a contributing building within an area listed on, the National Register of Historic Places, or is the subject of a pending application for such listing, or is eligible for such listing; or
- B. Is included in the Cultural Resources Inventory prepared by the Historical Commission; or
- C. Has been determined by vote of the Historical Commission to be a significant building after a finding by the Historical Commission that the building meets one or more of the following three criteria:
 - (1) Historical importance. The building meets the criterion of historical importance if it:
 - (a) Has character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the Town of Groton, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or the nation; or
 - (b) Is the site of an historic event; or
 - (c) Is identified with a person or group of persons who had significant influence on society; or
 - (d) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historic heritage of the community.
 - (2) Architectural importance. The structure meets the criterion of architectural importance if it:
 - (a) Portrays the environment of a group of people in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or
 - (b) Embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type; or
 - (c) Is the work of an architect, master builder or craftsman whose individual work has influenced the development of the Town of Groton or a wider region; or
 - (d) Contains elements of architectural design, detail, materials or craftsmanship, which represents a significant innovation.

- (3) Geographic importance. The structure meets the criterion of geographic importance if:
 - (a) The site is part of or related to a square, park, or other distinctive area; or
 - (b) The structure, as to its unique location or its physical characteristics, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, village center, or the community as a whole.

§ 125-3. Procedure.

No permit for the demolition of a significant building or part thereof shall be issued except as provided in this chapter, as well as in conformity with the provisions of other laws and bylaws applicable to the demolition of buildings and the issuance of permits generally.

A. Application contents. Every application for a demolition permit shall be filed with the Building Inspector and shall contain the following information:

- (1) The address of the building to be demolished;
- (2) The owner's name, address and telephone number;
- (3) A brief description of the type of building and the condition requiring issuance of the permit;
- (4) Age of building as established by the Board of Assessors, deed or documentation verifying year of construction;-

(5) A brief description of the proposed reuse, reconstruction or replacement;

(5)(6) Photographs clearly depicting the building in question.

B. Within seven (7) days after receipt of any application for a demolition permit, the Building Inspector shall forward a copy to the Commission. No demolition permit shall be issued during this time.

C. Within thirty (30)14 days after receipt of a copy of the application for demolition permit from the Building Inspector, the Historical Commission or its designee shall make a determination of architectural and/or historical significance ("determination of significance"). Upon determination by the Historical Commission that the building is not architecturally and/or historically significant, the Historical Commission shall so notify the Building Inspector and the applicant in writing. Upon receipt of such notification, or after the expiration of thirty (30)25 days from the date of application submission to the Building Department if the Building Inspector has not received notification from the Historical Commission, the Building Inspector may issue the demolition permit. Upon determination by the Historical Commission that the building is historically and/or architecturally significant, the Building Inspector and the applicant shall be so notified by the Historical Commission in writing within thirty (30)25 days from the date of application submission to the Building Department, and a demolition permit shall not be issued.

D. The Historical Commission shall hold a public hearing within thirty (30) days of the determination of significance to determine whether the building should be preferably preserved. Public notice of the time, place and purpose of the hearing shall be published by the Historical Commission at the expense of the applicant in a newspaper of general circulation in the Town or online platform of comparable reach, as approved by the Commission, not less than fourteen (14) days before the day of said hearing and shall be posted on the Town's website for the same period. in a conspicuous place in the Town Hall for a period of not less than seven days before the day of said hearing.

E. The Commission shall decide at the public hearing or within fourteen (14) days after the public hearing whether the building should be preferably preserved. If agreed to in writing by the applicant, the determination of the Commission may be postponed.

~~E.F.~~ If after a public hearing the Historical Commission determines that the significant building should not be preferably preserved, the Historical Commission shall, within twenty-onefive (21) days after the hearing, notify in writing the Building Inspector and the applicant of the determination and the Building Inspector may issue a demolition permit upon receipt of the written determination.

~~F.G.~~ If after a public hearing the Historical Commission determines that the significant building should be preferably preserved ("preservation determination"), the Historical Commission shall, within twenty-onefive (21) days after the hearing, notify in writing the Building Inspector and the applicant, and no demolition permit may be issued until twenty-four (24+8) months after the date of the preservation determination by the Historical Commission, and the applicant has met the requirements outlined in section 125-4.
[Amended 10-1-2018 ATM by Art. 16]

Upon a determination by the Commission that a building is preferably preserved, no building permit for new construction or alterations to the subject building shall be issued for a period of twenty-four (24) months from the date of the determination unless otherwise agreed to by the Commission when required for safety, building integrity, or as part of a plan to preserve the building.-

Following the twenty-four (24) month delay period, Nno permit for demolition of a building determined to be a preferably preserved building shall be granted until all plans for future use and development of the site have been filed with the Building CommissionerInspector and have found to comply with all laws pertaining to the issuance of a building permit and any other approvals necessary for the intended use. All approvals necessary for the issuance of such building permit or certificate of occupancy including without limitation any necessary zoning variances or special permits, must be granted and all appeals from the granting of such approvals must be concluded, prior to the issuance of a demolition permit under this section.

If the site is proposed to be vacant, the property owner must file a signed affidavit with the Building CommissionerInspector attesting that no development is planned for the site and that it will remain in a vacant state for the foreseeable future. No permit for any type of construction may be granted for the property in question under this subsection for an

additional period of twenty-four (24) months following the expiration of the demolition delay, unless an exemption is granted by the Historical Commission when part of a plan to construct a comparable replacement to the demolished building.

Notwithstanding anything contained in Subsection G, the Building Inspector may issue a demolition permit for a building with a preservation determination at any time after receipt of written advice from the Historical Commission to the effect that either:

[Amended 10-1-2018 ATM by Art. 16]

- (1) The Historical Commission is satisfied that there is no reasonable likelihood that either the owner or some other person or group is willing to purchase, preserve, rehabilitate or restore such building; or
- (2) The Historical Commission is satisfied that for at least twenty-four (24) months the applicant has made continuing, bona fide and reasonable efforts to locate a purchaser to preserve, rehabilitate or restore the subject building, and that such efforts have been unsuccessful.

§ 125-4. Responsibility of owners.

A. Once a significant building is given a determination of significance by the Historical Commission, the applicant and owner shall be responsible for properly securing the building to the satisfaction of the Building Inspector, whether occupied or vacant. Should the applicant fail to so secure the building and the significant building is destroyed at any time during the twenty-four (24)-month demolition delay period and such destruction could have been prevented by the required security measures as determined by the Building Inspector, it shall be considered a demolition in violation of this chapter.

[Amended 10-1-2018 ATM by Art. 16]

B. Also, the applicant shall allow the Historical Commission or a designee appointed by the Historical Commission access to the significant building and property, for the purpose of documenting the building under the survey process of the Massachusetts Historical Commission and for the purpose of showing the building to prospective purchasers or preservers.

C. During the entire twenty-four (24) month demolition delay period, the property owner shall make a good faith effort to sell the property in order to preserve the building, unless granted an exemption by vote of the Historical Commission where the owner has demonstrated that such efforts will be futile. This provision "Good faith efforts" includes the following:

- The significant building must be sold along with the land on which it currently sits to maintain its historic context. For the avoidance of doubt this requirement cannot be satisfied by the owner offering the building to be moved to another location, unless an exemption is granted such relocation is approved by the Historical Commission. The amount of land to be sold with the significant building shall be governed by all applicable zoning regulations. If legally permitted, this may include the subdivision of the property. Any related expenses will be borne by the applicant.

- The property in question must be publicly advertised for sale. This includes the conspicuous posting of such notice on the property, as well as in at least one (1) other suitable public outlet typically utilized by persons offering real estate for sale (including, but not limited to, the Multiple Listing Service). This shall be done at the owner's sole expense. The twenty-four (24) month demolition delay period shall not begin until the provisions of this section are met and the applicant informs the Commission of such. If at any time during the demolition delay period the applicant ceases to meet the provisions of this section, the delay period may be paused until the provisions are once again met. The Commission will notify the applicant of any such pause, and the reason for the same.
- The offer for sale must be constructed in a bona fide and commercially reasonable manner. The object of this provision is limited to preventing the owner from impeding the preservation of the property by offering the property for sale other than on commercially reasonable terms.
- If the owner declines an offer to purchase the property in question and does not accept another offer within two (2) weeks, the applicant must inform the Commission, in writing, of the offer price and the reason that the offer was declined. The owner shall document such good faith efforts and provide reports to the Commission, at least once every two (2) months during the delay period, of such good faith efforts.

§ 125-5. Emergency demolition.

- A. Notwithstanding the other provisions of this chapter, the Building Inspector may issue a demolition permit at any time in the event of imminent and substantial danger to the health and safety of the public due to deteriorating conditions. Prior to doing so, the Building Inspector shall inspect the building and document, in writing, the findings and reasons requiring an emergency demolition, a copy of which shall be forwarded immediately to the Historical Commission. Before allowing emergency demolition, the Building Inspector shall make every effort to inform the Chairperson of the Commission of his intention to allow demolition.
- B. No provision of this chapter is intended to conflict with or abridge any obligations or rights conferred by Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 143, regarding removal or demolition of dangerous or abandoned structures. In the event of a conflict, the applicable provisions of Chapter 143 shall control.

§ 125-6. Enforcement and remedies.

- A. The Historical Commission is authorized to adopt rules and regulations to carry out its duties and functions under this chapter
- B. The Historical Commission is specifically authorized to institute any and all actions and proceedings, in law or equity, as it may deem necessary and appropriate to obtain compliance with the requirements of this chapter or to prevent a threatened violation thereof.

- C. No building permit for any premises upon which a significant building has been voluntarily demolished in violation of this chapter shall be issued for a period of two years after the date of the completion of such demolition. The design shall first be reviewed, and must be accepted by, the Historical Commission. As used herein, "premises" refers to the parcel of land upon which the demolished significant building was located and all adjoining parcels of land under common ownership or control.
- D. Notwithstanding the foregoing, whenever the Historical Commission shall, on its own initiative or on application of the applicant, determine that earlier reconstruction, restoration or other remediation of any demolition in violation of this chapter better serves the intent and purpose of this chapter, it may, prior to the expiration of said period of two years, authorize issuance of a building permit, upon such conditions as the Historical Commission deems necessary or appropriate to effectuate the purposes of this chapter, and may so notify the Building Inspector.
- E. If the property owner fails to abide by the terms of section 125-4, the Historical Commission may pause the demolition delay period until the provisions are met.
- F. The Commission is authorized to adopt a schedule of reasonable fees to cover the costs associated with the administration of this bylaw.
- D.—Any owner of a building subject to this bylaw that demolished the building without first obtaining a demolition permit in accordance with the provisions of this bylaw shall be subject to a fine of not more than Three Hundred Dollars (\$300). Each day the violation exists shall constitute a separate offense until a faithful recreation of the demolished building is completed or unless otherwise agreed to by the Commission.

§ 125-7. Historic District Act.

Nothing in this chapter shall be deemed to conflict with the provisions of the Historic Districts Act, Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40C. If any of the provisions of this chapter do so conflict, that act shall prevail. Following a determination that the building is significant and preferably preserved, the Commission may recommend to town meeting that the building be protected through the provisions of Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 40C, the Historic Districts Act. The steps required under M.G.L. Chapter 40C shall be followed prior to the establishment of a local historic district. Buildings included within the boundaries of a local historic district established under M.G.L Chapter 40C shall not be subject to this bylaw so long as the proposed demolition is regulated by the local historic district bylaw.

§ 125-8. Severability.

In case any section, paragraph or part of this chapter is for any reason declared invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, every other section, paragraph and part shall continue in full force and effect.

NOTES



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	1
Greenway Committee	2
Groton Sewer Commission	1
Housing Authority	1
Housing Partnership	3
Local Cultural Council	2
Old Burying Ground Commission	3
Scholarship Committee	1
Sustainability Commission	1
Weed Harvester Committee	3
Williams Barn Committee	1
Zoning Board of Appeals (Associate Member)	1

