GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE

The structure of the Town's government combines a modern professional approach with the traditional town meeting form. Since 1957, the Town has been governed by a Town Council-Town Manager-Representative Town Meeting (RTM) structure. A revised Town Charter was adopted on November 4, 2008 and became effective January 3, 2009.

The Town Council is responsible for determining policy and appointing the Town Manager to execute this policy and administer the day-to-day affairs of the Town. The Council holds public hearings on the budget and sets the tax rate. It appoints one of its nine (9) members as Mayor to serve as chairperson of its meetings and as the Town's representative at ceremonial functions. The councilors each are elected for two-year terms.

The Town Manager is appointed by and directly responsible to the Council and serves for no definite term, but at the pleasure of the Council. The Manager is responsible to the Council for the supervision and administration of Town departments and boards and commissions of the Town, except those elected by the people, or appointed by the Council, Mayor or a regional or state authority. The Council appoints the Town's independent financial auditor.

The Council approves a budget that it sends to the RTM for consideration and final approval. The RTM must approve the budget before the Council sets the final tax rate. In most other matters, the RTM reviews the actions of the Council and has the power of initiative to institute legislation or force reconsideration of legislation already adopted. RTM members are elected by seven (7) voting districts for two-year terms.

Within the Town of Groton there are two political subdivisions, the City of Groton and Groton Long Point Association. In addition, there are seven (7) special taxing districts within the Town. For the political subdivisions, the Town funds up to one hundred percent of their public works budgets and up to fifty percent of their public safety budgets. The special districts are organized units of government within the Town, having separate governing bodies. They were established by special acts of the State legislature for specific purposes such as fire protection. All these governmental units have individual taxing authority.

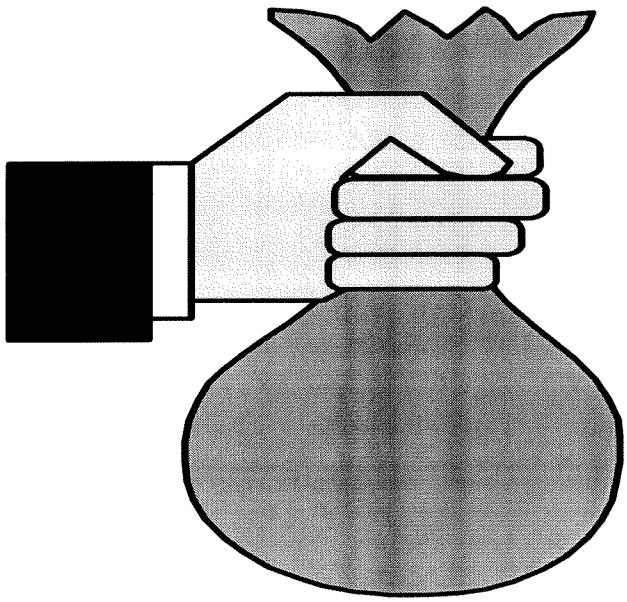
BUDGETARY CONTROL

The Town maintains extensive budgetary controls. The objective of these controls is to ensure compliance with legal provisions embodied in the annual appropriated budget approved by the Town Council and RTM. Activities of the general fund, certain special revenue funds and the debt service are included in the annual appropriated budget. Project-length budgets are prepared for the capital projects funds. The level of budgetary control (i.e., the level at which expenditures cannot legally exceed the appropriated amount) is the function level within each fund.

At the direction of the Town Manager, all Department Directors are expected to follow strict guidelines for expenditure control within the approved function appropriation. The Town Manager reserves the right to set "administrative spending authority" limits when justified to maintain the fiscal integrity of the budget. Department Directors are evaluated on budget management abilities.

The Town also maintains an encumbrance accounting system as another method of maintaining budgetary control. All purchases, except certain services as outlined in the Town's Purchasing Manual, require a purchase requisition and a purchase order. In addition, purchases over $500 require evidence that quotations were received and that the lowest quote, consistent with quality, was selected. The Town's Purchasing Manual requires formal competitive bids for expenditures over $15,000. Funds are recorded as encumbered when the purchase order is issued and expenditures are recorded when the Town issues a check or incurs a liability.

All unexpended and unencumbered appropriations lapse at year-end except in the Capital Reserve Fund where appropriations are continued until completion of the projects or five years from date of appropriation, whichever is less. However, any project shall be deemed to have been abandoned if three (3) fiscal years lapse without any expenditure from or encumbrance of the appropriation therefore. Budgetary control in the Capital Reserve Fund is achieved by the constraints imposed by the project's authorization or grant awards related to these funds.

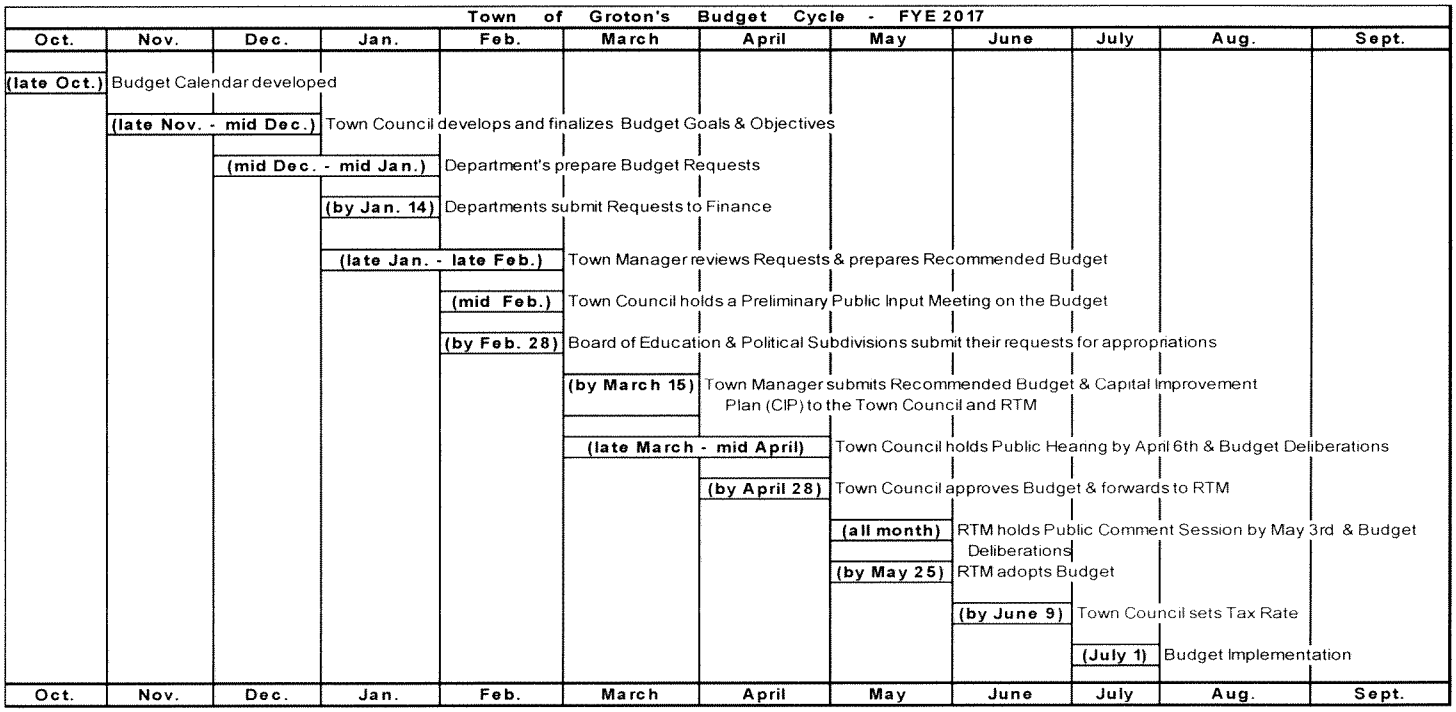


Budgetary Process

The budget process for the Town of Groton begins in October of each year preceding the beginning of the fiscal year (July 1). This process is a time for priority setting: define and prioritize needs, evaluate alternatives, and then budget appropriately to meet those needs. Budget discussions with the Town Manager and Department Directors set the tone for implementation. During the FYE 2017 development, the Directors were asked to submit a "level service" budget. In addition, directors were asked to submit with their initial budget request, reductions in their budget that would bring about budgets representing a 0% increase and a 5% decrease from the FYE 2016 Adopted Budget.

The Budget Cycle:

One of the functions of a budget is to provide a financial plan for the organization's operations for a given period of time. For the Town of Groton, the budget provides a plan from July through June of each year. Prior to implementation in July, the budget is developed with the aid, cooperation and resources of many participants. The entire process consumes almost a full year, from development of the goals, objectives and budget guidelines and assumptions by the Town Council in October through the implementation of the approved budget and printing of the Adopted Budget document. Opportunities for public comment are available throughout March and April before the final adoption of the budget by June. An overview of a typical Town of Groton Budget Cycle follows:



TOWN OF GROTON, CONNECTICUT

DEBT POLICY
&
MANAGEMENT / FISCAL PRACTICES

Revised by the Town Council on: February 4, 2014
Revised by the Town Council on: May 19, 2009
ADOPTED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL ON: SEPTEMBER 21, 1993.

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A. Purpose:

1. To establish a criteria for the issuance of debt obligations so as not to exceed acceptable levels of indebtedness.

2. To provide consistency and continuity to public policy development through the Town's Capital Improvement Program, a mechanism that provides evidence of a commitment to meet infrastructure needs through a planned program of future financing, and

3. To transmit a message to investors and rating agencies who value such evidence of a community's commitment to financial management.

B. Guiding Principles/General Policies:

1. The Town Charter Section 9.13 "Borrowing" and applicable State Statutes governs the Town's issuance of debt as it pertains to referendum requirements and state mandated debt limitations.

2. The Town will conduct its debt management functions in a manner designed to maintain or enhance its existing credit ratings (Fitch: AA; Moody's: Aa2; and Standard & Poor: AA+).

3. Debt issuance will be utilized by the town only in those cases where equity, effectiveness and efficient use of limited resources favor debt over alternative sources of funds. The Town shall view debt as a mechanism to equalize the costs of improvements to present and future residents. The issuance of debt should provide a sufficient sum of money to make major improvements when it is needed and should take into account the relative costs of obtaining the funds. Decision criteria considered shall include the following:

   (a) Debt shall be primarily used to finance capital projects with a relatively long life expectancy, i.e., ten (10) years or greater. Capital requirements that are recurring, of relative small scale, or are for short-lived improvement should be funded through current funds or the Capital Reserve Fund.
   (b) Debt shall be issued in such a way so that the term of the financing does not exceed the useful life of the asset.

4. All budgeted funds are required to be balanced. As such, total anticipated revenues, plus fund balance applied if applicable, must equal the sum of budgeted expenditures for each fund.

5. The Town maintains a financial and budgetary control system to ensure adherence to the budget and an awareness of the financial environment, preparing quarterly reports to compare actual revenues and expenditures to budgeted amounts.

C. Capital Improvement Program:

1. A Capital Improvement Program shall be prepared by Town staff and submitted to the Planning Commission as per Connecticut General State Statutes.

2. The Town Council shall approve a Capital Improvement Program annually.

3. The Capital Improvement Program shall consist of a multi-year priority listing of long term capital projects, accompanied by a financing plan which finances all projects in the plan, and is supported by the appropriate sources of revenue. The financing plan shall be in accordance with the debt management policies contained herein.

4. It is the intent of these policies that authorized projects must be part of an adopted Capital Improvement Program.

5. Appropriations for construction or for other permanent improvements from whatever source derived shall not lapse until the purpose for which the appropriation was made shall have been accomplished or abandoned. However any project shall be deemed to have been abandoned if three (3) fiscal years lapse without any expenditure from or encumbrance of the appropriation therefore. Furthermore, any such appropriation which has not been completely expended at the end of five (5) years from the date thereof shall thereupon lapse, unless re-appropriated or extended.

D. Capital Reserve Fund:

1. A Capital Reserve Fund shall be funded annually to ensure that adequate funds are available to purchase equipment, repairs and improvements on a timely basis. This program is designed to stabilize budgeting for such purchases and to fund that part of the Town's capital budget related to those purchases.

2. As per council resolution adopted in December of 1984 and Ordinance Number 179 adopted on September 17, 1985, the Town Manager shall include in the proposed annual budget not less than four (4) percent of the total General Fund Budget for the purpose of paying current outstanding debt service and allocating funds to a "Reserve Fund for Capital and Non-Recurring Expenditures". The amount of said Capital Reserve Fund for capital items will be the remainder after subtracting the necessary debt service payments. The amount so allocated shall be subject to the annual budgetary process.

E. Management:

1. It shall be the responsibility of the Town Manager or his designee to maintain all necessary files associated with the issuance of Town debt.

2. The Town Manager shall submit for Council consideration a fiscal impact statement prior to any Council action to authorize a project involving the issuance of debt. The fiscal impact statement shall contain tables, charts and graphs which address the following:

   (a) an estimate of the debt service levy to be required at the time of long term debt issuance,
   (b) a calculation showing the impact of this additional levy to the existing debt service levy at that time,
   (c) a schedule showing the impact of such issuance on the mill rate over the period of time that the issuance is for, and
   (d) a table setting forth the computation of the debt limit of the Town and the debt incurring margin as set by State Statute and listing various debt ratios relating to the Town's indebtedness.

F. Debt Issuance Ratios/Limits and Repayment Schedules:

1. The Town shall use the following limits to guide issuance of debt:

   (a) The Town shall not exceed fifty (50) percent of its statutory debt limit.
   (b) Total direct indebtedness shall not exceed five (5) percent as percentage of full valuation (most recent equalized grand list as developed by the State of Connecticut).
   (c) Total debt service shall not exceed ten (10) percent of the Total General Fund expenditures.

2. Repayment schedules shall be designed to relate to the useful life of the asset and generally be in accordance with the following:

   (a) Fifteen (15) years for most general obligation public improvement debt.
   (b) Twenty (20) years for benefit district debt and debt supported by special revenues.
   (c) Ten (10) to twenty (20) years for capital improvement of town-wide significance and where justified by the magnitude of the project.
   (d) On an overall basis, all general obligation debt shall be structured to retire at least fifty (50) percent of the Town's indebtedness within ten (10) years.

G. Operating Reserves:

1. The maintenance of adequate operating reserves is essential to the financial strength and flexibility of the Town as a whole. They are an integral part of the financial structure of the Town and help make it possible for the Town to issue debt. Operating reserves are a significant factor considered in evaluating and assigning credit ratings by the bond rating agencies.

2. The Town shall maintain the following reserves:
   (a) An annual contingency reserve in the general fund operating budget which is not more than two (2) percent of annual expenditures.
   (b) An unassigned General Fund reserve maintained in an amount equal to at least seven and three-quarters (7.75%) percent of annual general fund expenditures.
   (c) A sixty (60) day reserve in special revenue funds in order to meet potential unanticipated needs.

H. Continuing Disclosure:

The Town is committed to continuing disclosure of financial and pertinent credit information relevant to the Town's outstanding securities and will abide by the provisions of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Rule 15c2-12 concerning primary and secondary market disclosure. The Town shall file such information through a nationally recognized municipal securities information repository (NRMSIR) and where applicable on the Town's web page.

I. Alternative Financing Plan:

The Town Manager is allowed to suggest to the Town Council an alternative financing plan for proposed capital projects if a complete analysis indicates that an alternative approach is deemed in the best interests of the Town of Groton.

Excerpt from Town Charter that describes the process for preparing, reviewing, adopting and amending the budget.

CHAPTER IX. BUDGET AND FINANCE

9.1 Annual Budget Preparation.

9.1.1 The Budget shall provide a complete financial plan of all town funds to be appropriated for the ensuing fiscal year and, except as required by CGS or this Charter, shall be in such form as the Council may require. The Budget shall begin with a general summary of its contents; shall show in detail all estimated income, including the proposed property tax levy, and all proposed expenditures, including debt service, for the ensuing fiscal year; and shall be so arranged to show comparative figures for actual revenue and expenditures of the preceding fiscal year, estimated revenue and expenditures of the current fiscal year, and estimates of revenue and requested budget for the next fiscal year.

9.1.2 The Budget shall include the Town Manager's recommendations of the amounts to be appropriated for the several departments, departmental functions, offices or agencies of the Town for the ensuing fiscal year for all items, except that the Town Manager shall transmit to the Council the estimates for the BOE or any political subdivision within the Town as submitted to the Town Manager under Section 9.2. Upon the request of the Council, the Town Manager may provide comments on the budget estimates of any political subdivision. The Town Manager shall present reasons for all the manager's recommendations with other such information as may be required by the Council.

9.1.3 *Proposed Capital Projects.*

As part of the annual Budget or as a separate report attached thereto, the Town Manager shall present a program, previously considered and acted upon by the Town Planning Commission in accordance with the CGS, concerning municipal improvements and proposed capital projects for the ensuing fiscal year and for the five (5) fiscal years thereafter. Estimates of the costs of such projects shall be submitted by each department, departmental function, office or agency including the BOE annually in the form and manner prescribed by the Town Manager. The Town Manager shall recommend to the Council those projects to be undertaken during the ensuing fiscal year and the methods of financing the same. All proposed capital projects, regardless of the proposed method or source of funding, shall be included in the Budget. No capital project, regardless of the method or source of funding, shall be undertaken until it has been approved by a majority vote of the RTM.

9.1.4 *Fiscal Year.*

The fiscal year of the Town shall begin on July 1st and end June 30th unless changed by the CGS.

9.2 Duties of the Town Manager on the Budget.

The Town Manager shall require each department, office or agency of the Town supported wholly or in part by town funds, or for which a specific town appropriation is made, including the BOE and any political subdivision within the Town requesting an appropriation, to set forth in such form as the Council may prescribe, a program or programs showing services, activities and work accomplished during the current year and to be accomplished during the ensuing year. Estimated cost of services, work and activities shall be included.

9.2.1 *Budget Estimates.*

9.2.1.1 The Town Manager shall compile preliminary estimates for the annual Budget. The head of each department, office or agency of the Town, except the BOE and any political subdivision within the Town requesting town appropriation, shall file with the Town Manager on or before January 14th on forms prescribed and provided by the Manager a detailed estimate of the expenditures to be incurred by each department, departmental function or agency and the revenue, other than tax revenues, to be earned thereby in the ensuing fiscal year and such other information as may be required by the Council or the Town Manager.

9.2.1.2. The Chairman of the BOE shall submit a similar report on or before February 28th.

9.2.1.3. The governing body of any political subdivision within the Town requesting town appropriations shall submit a similar report on or before February 28th.

9.2.2. Not later than March 15th the Town Manager shall present to the Council a total Budget of the general form and content described in Section 9.1.

Sec. 9.3 Duties of the Council on the Budget.

9.3.1 *General.*

Following receipt of the proposed budget estimates from the Town Manager, the Chairman of the BOE, and the political subdivisions, and not later than April 6th, the Council shall hold at least one public hearing at which the public may have an opportunity to be heard regarding appropriations for the ensuing fiscal year. At least ten (10) days prior to the aforementioned public hearing, the Council shall cause sufficient copies of said budget estimates to be made available for general distribution in the office of the Town Clerk; shall cause a copy of said estimates to be made available for download via the internet; and shall cause to be published in a newspaper having circulation in the Town, a notice of such public hearing and a summary of said proposed budget estimates and also showing the amount proposed to be raised by taxation. After holding such hearing and on or before April 28th, the Council shall approve a Budget, present the same to the RTM, and set a date for the annual budget meeting of the RTM. The Council's proposed Budget need not be limited in total or in any particular by the recommendations of the Town Manager, the BOE, nor any political subdivision within the Town.

9.3.2 *Tax rate.*

When the Council approves the Budget, it shall also compute the tax rate in mills which would be levied on the taxable property in the Town for the ensuing fiscal year if the RTM adopts the Budget. Such tax shall be sufficient to pay all estimated expenses for the ensuing year, and any deficits of the current year. When the RTM has approved a final Budget, the Council shall determine the final tax rate on or before June 9th.

Sec. 9.4 Duties of the RTM on the Budget.

Following receipt of the Budget approved by the Council, the RTM shall meet as directed by the Council for the consideration of the Budget. This meeting shall be held on or before May 3rd at such hour and at such place as the Council shall direct. It may be adjourned from time-to-time provided that final action be taken on the Budget not later than May 25th.

The RTM may cut appropriations recommended in the Budget and may, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting, restore cuts made in a department appropriation by the Council; provided, that in no case can the final total of the Budget or of any bond issue be greater than that proposed by the Town Manager (including the BOE budget) or by the Council, whichever is greater. The RTM shall return the approved Budget to the Council.

Sec. 9.5 Failure to adopt Budget.

9.5.1 *Council fails to adopt Budget.*

Should the Council fail to approve a Budget on or before April 28th, the Budget as transmitted by the Town Manager, in accordance with the provisions of Section 9.2.2 of this Charter, shall be presented to the RTM. Should the RTM adopt a Budget at the annual budget meeting as specified in Section 9.4 of this Charter, the RTM's adopted Budget shall be deemed to be the Budget of the Town, and the Council shall lay the tax rate in accordance therewith.

9.5.2 *RTM fails to adopt Budget.*

Should the Council approve a Budget on or before April 28th, and the RTM fails to adopt a Budget at the annual budget meeting as specified in Section 9.4 of this Charter, the Council's approved Budget shall be deemed to be the Budget of the Town, and the Council shall lay the tax rate in accordance therewith.

9.5.3 *Both Council and RTM fail to adopt Budget.*

Should the Council fail to approve a Budget on or before April 28th, the Budget as transmitted by the Town Manager in accordance with the provisions of Section 9.2.2 of the Charter, shall be presented to the RTM. Should the RTM fail to adopt a Budget at the annual budget meeting as specified in Section 9.4 of the Charter, the Budget as transmitted by the Town Manager in accordance with Section 9.2.2 of the Charter shall be deemed to be the Budget of the Town, and the Town Manager shall lay the tax rate in accordance therewith.

Sec. 9.6 Financial Powers of the RTM.

Any appropriation of ten thousand dollars ($10,000) or more in addition to or supplementary to the annual budget appropriation, the issuance of bonds or notes, except notes in anticipation of taxes to be paid within the fiscal year in which issued, and any resolution providing for the sale of real estate of the Town valued in excess of ten thousand dollars ($10,000) used or reserved for town purposes or the purchase of real estate valued in excess of ten thousand dollars ($10,000) for such purposes, shall become effective, except as otherwise specifically provided in this Charter, only after it has been adopted by the RTM by the vote of the majority of those present and voting at such meeting.

The RTM shall not act upon any proposal for the sale or purchase of real estate or the issuance of bonds or other borrowing except upon recommendation of the Council nor act upon any appropriation which has not been acted upon by the Council.

No capital project, regardless of the method or source of funding, shall be undertaken until it has been approved by a majority vote of the RTM.

Sec. 9.7 Emergency Appropriations.
Emergency appropriations not exceeding fifty thousand dollars ($50,000.00) in any one fiscal year may be made upon the recommendation of the Town Manager and by a vote of not less than seven (7) members of the Council for the purpose of meeting a public emergency threatening either the lives, health or property of citizens; provided a public hearing, at which any elector or taxpayer of the Town shall have an opportunity to be heard, shall be held prior to making such appropriations, notice of which hearing shall be given in a local daily newspaper having circulation in the Town not more than ten (10) days nor less than five (5) days prior to such hearing. Such hearing and notice of hearing may be waived if the Council by an affirmative vote of not less than eight (8) of its members shall decide that a delay in making the emergency appropriation would jeopardize the lives or health or property of citizens.

In addition to the above appropriation, upon the recommendation of the Town Manager, the Council may also make an emergency appropriation for similar purposes not exceeding ten thousand dollars ($10,000) without any such hearing and notice upon the affirmative vote of not less than six (6) of its members. In the absence of an available unappropriated and unencumbered surplus in the general fund to meet such appropriations, additional means of financing shall be provided in such a manner, consistent with the provisions of the CGS and of the Charter, as may be determined by the Council.

Sec. 9.8 Tax Bills.
It shall be the duty of the Tax Collector to prepare and mail to each taxpayer, before the date when taxes are due and payable, a tax bill the form of which shall be acceptable to the Commissioner of Revenue Services.

Sec. 9.9 Assessment and Collection of Taxes.
Except as specifically provided in the Charter, the assessment of property for taxation and the collection of taxes shall be carried on as provided in the CGS.

Sec. 9.10 Expenditures and Accounting.
9.10.1 *General.*
No purchase shall be made by any department, ABC, or officer of the Town other than the BOE, the Probate Court, except through the Purchasing Agent and such purchases shall be made under such rules and regulations as may be established by the Council. The Director of Finance shall record the amounts of authorized purchases and contracts for future purchases as encumbrances against the appropriation from which they are to be paid.

9.10.2 *Approval by Director of Finance.*
No voucher, claim or charge against the Town shall be paid until the same has been audited by the Director of Finance or the Director's agent and approved by him/her for correctness and legality. Checks shall be drawn by the Director of Finance for the payment of approved claims which shall be valid only when countersigned by the Treasurer. The Council may make provision, by resolution, for other town officials, or town or BOE employees to sign and countersign checks in the absence or inability to act of either the Director of Finance or the Treasurer, or both, subject to such conditions as the Council may impose.

9.10.2.1 *Restrictions on purchasing.* Purchases shall be made under such rules and regulations as may be established by the Council, subject to the provisions of CGS.

9.10.3 *Method of making Payments.*
The Director of Finance shall prescribe the time at which and the manner in which persons receiving money on account of the Town shall pay the same to the Town Treasurer.

9.10.4 *Council Approval before exceeding Budgetary item.*
The several departments, commissions, officers and boards of the Town shall not involve the Town in any obligation to spend money for any purpose in excess of the amount appropriated therefor until the matter has been approved and voted by the Council and each order drawn upon the Treasurer shall state the department, commission, board or officer or the appropriation against which it is to be charged. When any department, commission, board or officer shall desire to secure a transfer of funds in its or his/her appropriation from funds set apart for one specific purpose

to another, before incurring any expenditure therefor, such department, commission, board or officer shall make application to the Town Manager whose duty it shall be to examine into the matter, and upon approval of the Council such transfer may be made but not otherwise.

9.10.5 *Council Authority for Transfer of Funds.*
Upon the request of the Town Manager, but only within the last three (3) months of the fiscal year, the Council may by resolution transfer any unencumbered appropriations, balance or portion thereof from one department, commission, board or office to another.
In no instance shall appropriations for debt service or other statutory charges be transferred to other purposes. Transfers of ten thousand dollars ($10,000) or more shall become effective only after they have been adopted by the RTM by the vote of the majority of those present and entitled to vote at such meeting.

9.10.6 *Supplemental appropriations.*
Additional appropriations over and above the total Budget may be made from time to time by the Council, except as otherwise provided in this Charter, upon recommendation of the Town Manager and certification from the Director of Finance or his/her agent as approved by the Town Manager that there is available an unappropriated and unencumbered surplus in general fund to meet such appropriations.

9.10.7 *Contingency account.*
No expenditure may be charged to the contingency account, but the Council may transfer funds in the contingency account to any other account. Transfers of ten thousand dollars ($10,000) or more shall become effective only after they have been adopted by the RTM by the vote of the majority of those present and entitled to vote at such meeting.

9.10.8 *Penalties for violations.*
Every payment made in violation of the provision of this Charter shall be deemed illegal and every official authorizing or making such payment or taking part therein and every person receiving such payment or any part thereof shall be jointly and severally liable to the Town for the full amount so paid or received. If any officer or employee of the Town or BOE shall knowingly incur any obligation or shall authorize or make any expenditure in violation of the provisions of the Charter or take any part therein, such action shall be cause for his/her removal.

Sec. 9.11 Contributions.
The annual Budget may include contributions to organizations or private corporations which perform a public function that benefits the Town and/or its residents. Such organizations or private corporations shall properly account for the proposed spending of funds provided by the Town.

Sec. 9.12 Annual Audit.
The Council shall require an annual audit of all accounts of record and all town funds appropriated, nonappropriated and held in trust in accordance with the CGS.

Sec. 9.13 Borrowing.
The Town shall have the power to incur indebtedness by issuing its bonds or notes as provided by the CGS subject to the limitations thereof and the provisions of this section.

The issuance of bonds and notes shall be authorized by ordinance and if any such bond issue or issuance of notes, except notes in anticipation of taxes to be paid or other revenue to be received within the fiscal year in which issued, shall exceed when authorized the sum of seven hundred fifty thousand dollars ($750,000) or which shall, when added to all other bond issues or issuance of notes previously authorized in the same fiscal year bring the total of such bond issues or issuance of notes authorized for that fiscal year to a sum in excess of seven hundred fifty thousand dollars ($750,000), said bond issue or issuance of notes shall be approved by a referendum vote at any regular town, state or special election or at a referendum called for that purpose.

ARTICLE I. IN GENERAL

Sec. 2-1. Reserve fund for capital and nonrecurring expenditures.

(a) *Creation of fund.* Pursuant to C.G.S. §§ 7-359 through 7-368, there is hereby established a reserve fund for capital and nonrecurring expenditures for the town.

(b) *Allocation to reserve fund.* The town manager shall include in the proposed annual budget to the town council an allocation of funds to the reserve fund based on the following formula: Calculate the amount of not less than four percent of the general fund budget, subtract the sum necessary to defray general fund obligated annual debt service, the remainder amount to be allocated to the reserve fund for capital and nonrecurring expenditures. The amount so allocated shall be subject to the annual budget and appropriation or supplemental appropriation process as provided in the Charter. No appropriation shall be made to such fund so that the total fund balance exceeds 50 percent of the total general fund budget, or the unappropriated portion of the fund exceeds 12 percent of the total general fund budget.

(c) *Appropriation from the fund.* The town manager shall annually recommend expenditures from such fund for the purpose of planning, construction, reconstruction, or acquisition of any specific capital improvement or acquisition of any specific item of equipment as provided by statute, such expenditures proposed shall be subject to the annual budget and appropriation or supplemental appropriation process as provided by the Charter. Appropriations from the fund shall be made only for capital assets, projects, or acquisitions of a nonrecurring nature, with a cost of over $25,000.00, and with a useful life expectancy of over five years. Supplemental appropriations from the fund shall require public notice, a public hearing, and simple majority vote of the town council and representative town meeting.

(d) *Maintenance of the fund.* At least quarterly, the town manager shall report to the town council on the status of the fund and the expended and unexpended balances of each appropriation.
(Ord. No. 179, 9-17-85)

TOWN OF GROTON, CONNECTICUT

BASIS OF BUDGETING AND ACCOUNTING

Background

There are three basic categories of differences between the basis of accounting and the basis of budgeting that follows generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) for state and local government: (1) Basis of Accounting – "Cash plus encumbrances" and "modified accrual" are two of the different ways to define revenue and expenditures; (2) Perspective – The budget and accounting reports may have different fund reporting structures, e.g., a budget may account for debt services in the Local Funds, while GAAP principles require that debt service be recorded in a separate fund; (3) Reporting Component – the Town's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) may present "reporting components and funds in different ways than the budget document.

Accounting System

The Town's accounting system is organized and operated on a fund basis. A fund is a group of functions combined into a separate accounting entity (corresponding to a corporation in the private sector) having its own assets, liabilities, equity, revenue and expenditure/expenses. The types of funds used are determined by GAAP. The number of funds established within each type is determined by sound financial administration. Specialized accounting and reporting principles and practices apply to governmental funds. Proprietary and trust funds are accounted for in the same manner as similar business enterprises or nonbusiness organizations.

Internal Control

Management of the Town is responsible for establishing and maintaining an internal control structure designed to ensure that the assets of the Town are protected from loss, theft or misuse and to ensure that adequate accounting data are compiled to allow for the preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles. The internal control structure is designed to provide reasonable, but not absolute, assurance that these objectives are met. The concept of reasonable assurance recognizes that: (1) the cost of a control should not exceed the benefits likely to be derived; and (2) the valuation of costs and benefits requires estimates and judgments by management.

Basis of Budgeting

The basis of budgeting refers to the conversions for recognition of costs and revenue in budget development and in establishing and reporting appropriations, which are the legal authority to spend or collect revenues. The Town uses a modified accrual basis for budgeting governmental funds under which expenditures are recorded at the time liabilities are incurred and revenues recorded when measurable and available to finance expenditures of the fiscal period. Propriety funds are budgeted using accrual concepts in which transactions are recognized at the time they are incurred, as opposed to when cash is received or spent. All operating and capital expenditures and revenue are identified in the budgeting process because of the need for appropriation authority.

The budget is fully reconciled to the accounting system at the beginning of the fiscal year, and in preparing the CAFR at the end of the fiscal year. A number of GAAP adjustments are made to reflect balance sheet requirements and their effect on the budget.