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Town of Concord
Community Preservation Committee
141 Keyes Road
Concord, MA 01742
October 22, 2025

RE: Conservation and Digitization of Town Record Books Volumes 1-5

Greetings.

I am writing to express my support for the project aimed at supporting the Conservation and Digitization of Town Record Books Volumes 1-5 submitted by Nathaniel Smith, Municipal Archivist/Records Manager for the Town of Concord. Preserving and enhancing access to these record books is not only about safeguarding our history; it is a vital investment in the cultural legacy of our community.

The significance of Town Books 1-5 cannot be overstated. These volumes contain important entries dating back to the early years of Concord's municipal governance, including information leading up to and during the Revolutionary War era. They document the roles of Minute Men and other soldiers, as well as details about Concord's Black history that are not found elsewhere. The information contained in the Town Books was instrumental in my soldier database project for the Concord250 History & Education Subcommittee. While these books provide crucial insights into our community's past, their physical condition is deteriorating, and their limited use in recent years highlights the urgent need for preservation.

Currently, these records are accessible only on microfilm, which is restricted to the hours of the William Munroe Special Collections and dependent on the availability of the microfilm machine. Digitizing these records will not only protect them from further decay but will also enhance accessibility for researchers, students, genealogists, and anyone interested in Concord's history. Making these documents available online will allow a broader audience to engage with our town's past.

I firmly believe that this initiative represents a significant step in honoring and preserving the history of the Town of Concord. I look forward to seeing our history preserved and made accessible for all.

Best regards,
Beth van Duzer, Public Historian