Mission:
Groton Utilities is a business leader in Southeastern Connecticut. We provide essential electric, water, and other services at prices which reflect exceptional customer value and quality. We enhance and support the vitality and livability of the communities we serve.

Financial Transactions:

- The Electric Division’s net earnings, before transfers to the City, during fiscal year 2020 were $7.5 million, which was 10% higher than budget. Electric rates were increased by 1% on April 1, 2020. The total revenue including pass-through sales of $54.8 million was on target with the budget. The Electric Division transferred over $4 million of its net earnings to the City during the past fiscal year. Over $42 million has been transferred to the City over the past thirteen (13) years, while offering customers some of the lowest electric rates in the region.

- The Water Division’s net earnings before the State of Connecticut Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) grant monies, during the past fiscal year were $840K. Total grants received from DWSRF during fiscal year 2020 were $3.8 million. The total revenue of $10.8 million was 1.2% or $124K higher than budget. Water rates were increased by 4% on July 1, 2019 and total of $750K was transferred to the restricted funds for the purpose of upgrading the Water Treatment Plant during the past fiscal year.

- The Sewer Division’s net earnings for fiscal year 2020 were $1.8 million. There was no sewer rate increase during fiscal year 2020. The total revenue of $4.6 million exceeded the budget by 19% or $731K which was drove by the higher than budget industrial sales.
Highlights and Accomplishments:

- **Electric Reliability Projects**
  - **400/1410/1280 Transmission Line Upgrade**: Groton Utilities management and staff is working in tandem with Eversource and their resources to identify, plan and replace several structures on the 400, 1410 and 1280 lines. This is a 1.8-mile section of transmission line that Groton Utilities owns from Buddington Substation to the Groton/Ledyard town line. The 50+ year old wood structures will be replaced with steel structures that will be engineered to outlast wooden structures. These projects will improve resiliency and reliability as well as help us meet or exceed NERC Compliance obligations.
  - **Maintenance Activities**: As part of a four-year maintenance program, Groton Utilities personnel perform the following: relay cleaning and testing, substation breaker maintenance, infrared scanning that looks for loose connections, transformer testing and vegetation control.
  - **Tree Trimming**: The number of power interruptions due to tree contact are on the decline due to extensive tree trimming. Two tree crews have been secured throughout the year, five days a week to ensure vegetation management is kept up. Both tree trimming crews are hard at work reducing the potential of power interruptions by removing trees and tree branches away from power lines. We have a 50-foot bucket and a 70-foot bucket now. That is an increase from two 50-foot buckets in the past. This helps us to eliminate canopy trees growing over the lines several feet above.
  - **Laurelwood Tie Point**: The aging underground and pole line structures are being replaced to ensure a secure and reliable cross connection from two separate feeds within the Groton Town area. This location is a tie point to allow back feeds across the territory.
  - **Reliability Statistics**: Over the last 12 months, the power was available to Groton Utilities’ customers on average 99.988% of the time. On average, customers were without power 79.819 minutes over the same period. When a power outage did occur, Electric Operations personnel restored power on average in 58.92 minutes.
  - **Ella T. Grasso Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical High School**: A new service has been designed and constructed directly from Fort Hill Road feeder to the new school and parking structure to ensure uninterrupted service and reliability to the State Technical School.
  - **Groton Utilities Regional Water Treatment Facility**: A new service has been designed and constructed to supply electric service to the new $51 Million Water Treatment Facility being constructed with an expectation of completion in 2021. This service will ensure reliable power with a backup feed.
  - **Industrial/Commercial AMI Metering Upgrades**: Automated Metering Infrastructure (AMI) allows all meters to communicate electric usage and outage information. The commercial and industrial meters are being upgraded to AMI meters throughout the service territory and should be completed by mid-2021. This will ensure consistent metering data and will communicate back to Groton Utilities during outages to assist with timely restorations.

- **Water Projects**
  - **Water Treatment Plant Rebuild Project**: Work continues on the upgrade of the Water Treatment Plant. Upon completion, the plant will operate with state of the art equipment removing present and emergent contaminants. The original plant was built in 1939 with several expansions and improvements over the decades. The plant continues to be regulatory compliant during construction. The project was awarded to R.H. White Construction with a Notice to Proceed on August 22, 2017. The project is forecasted to be completed spring of 2021.
  - **Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) Meter Program**: GU continues to upgrade its water meters with more efficient and lead-free meters. This year 651 residential and seven commercial meters were changed out. Since the change-out program began we have installed 6,552 new lead-free, efficient water meters for our customers. This project was in the planning stage for several years and is identified as a capital bond project.
  - **Distribution System Upgrades**: Walker Hill Standpipe, constructed in 1947 was replaced with a new standpipe capable of holding more water and improving water quality. The standpipe provides normal and emergency water to the US Navy base. In conjunction with the tank work, Phases II and III, consisting of installing a new 16” water main on Walker Hill Road and Tollgate Road, plus a new pump station is out to bid. The projects have been in the planning stages for several years and are bond-funded projects, the monies of which are supported by water rates. Going forward GU will shift its emphasis to rehabilitate the water distribution system. A ten-year plan is being vetted and will require state approvals, and funding through Bond Funds.

- **Water Division Highlights**
  - **Employee Development**: GU continues to develop and implement work force planning both in the hiring and training opportunities for all employees. This year GU added staff in Water Distribution and Laboratory sections replacing retired employees and preparing GU for future challenges within the field.
Emergent Contaminants: GU takes very seriously its mandated responsibility to analyze for emergent contaminants such as harmful algae, and poly fluorinated compounds. GU continues to test for all parameters as defined by both federal and state regulators. GU will continue to test for the presence of lead in several locations in the water distribution system. GU recently enhanced its corrosion control treatment systems to protect consumers from products of corrosion in piping. GU remains regulatory compliant. Our annual Water Quality Report is available to our valued customers.

Watershed: With new staffing previously hired, GU is improving the extent and detail of our watershed sanitary survey meeting residents who live or work within the watershed and evaluating systems and residences in the handling of chemicals, farm wastes, and septic wastes. GU is also continuing its partnerships and discussions with various environmental organizations who share our mission and vision of protecting water quality while still allowing access for scientific study and supervised recreation. GU is now working on a phased forestry program to protect the watershed and improve source water quality. GU continues monitoring wildlife under regulatory guidelines.

Wastewater Division Highlights

Groton Utilities is pursuing improvements to both the sewer collection system and plant. Facility Plans will be developed for proper short and long term planning. A Request for Qualification (RFP) was recently posted with the goal of hiring a consultant to assist in short and long term planning. Financial planning has been performed to guide expenses and rates. The plant continues to be regulatory compliant.

Key Accounts Customer Service

Street lighting Upgrade Project: Groton Utilities completed upgrading the street lighting, along the public way, with light emitting diode (LED) technology last year. That upgrade continued with approval at UConn Avery Point campus this fiscal year to remove Metal Halide 205w converting to 99w LED’s during this summer break. These upgrades enhance nighttime visibility, reduce energy consumption, lower the system’s carbon footprint, and improve the campus’s nighttime safety.

UConn’s Marine Science Building: UConn’s Marine Science Building Retro Commissioning Project with Johnson Controls Energy Savings Program dramatically reduced electric energy use. The results of these significant savings capped at a rebate in the range of $100K.

Pfizer: Pfizer has followed suit with their Phase 1 of LED parking and campus lighting retrofitting completion in June 2020 with Phase 2 expected to begin by November 1, 2020.

The New London Submarine Base Renewable Energy Fuel Cells: 7.4 MWs of Connecticut’s renewable energy fuel cells started construction on the Base’s Enhanced Use Lease (EUL) property. The installation will integrate into a Micro-grid sponsored by a State of Connecticut multimillion dollar DEEP Grant, improving both Groton’s and the Navy’s overall energy resilience. The Subbase is also hosting a NORESCO Performance contract to install 10MW’s of natural gas generation to be on line by 2022. With the base micro-grid to follow.

Electric Vehicle Pilot Rebate Program: The evolution of the Electric Vehicle into Groton Utilities franchise area and its impact on the Electric Distribution System (EDS) initiated a study in July 2018. A Pilot Rebate Program offering 20 EV rebates for purchase or lease along with installation of a charger was offered to GU electric customers. To date about 50% of customers partook in the rebate program with purchase of EVs. The data derived will help establish the EVs’ effect on the EDS and prepare GU to adapt to the changes.

Communications Report

Website Activity: 58,147 people visited the Groton Utilities website during this past fiscal year, including 251,498 pages viewed. 1,115 people visited the site on November 1, 2019 due to a significant power outage in the Bozrah Light and Power service area. The mostly commonly accessed pages were related to bill payment and outage updates.

Social Media Activity: 44% increase in number of posts over the prior year on Groton Utilities Facebook page. The top post reached 22,108 people ("Think Before you Flush" Non-flushable items post). The GU Facebook page increased its number of followers by 18% from the prior year.

Communication Methods: During this past year Groton Utilities has added two social media outlets to our arsenal of communications - Bozrah Light and Power Facebook and Groton Utilities Instagram. Additionally we now use Constant Contact to e-mail relevant information to customers and residents.

Outreach: Groton Utilities continued its strong relationship with the Mystic Chamber of Commerce by being the primary sponsor of the 2019 Groton Fall Festival held at Poquonnock Plains Park as well as the Groton Holiday Kick-Off Event held at the Senior Center. Additionally we had another successful season of Concerts in the Park at Washington Park in 2019, co-
sponsored by the City of Groton Parks and Recreation Department. The 2020 season was delayed until July 2020 due to the COVID-19 crowd-size restrictions.

During the COVID-19 health crisis Groton Utilities has turned its attention to helping support local causes that aid residents during difficult financial times, making donations to the Groton Food Bank, S.A.F.E. in Groton, TVCCA Meals on Wheels, the Groton Utilities Energy Assistance Fund as well the Town of Groton School System Grab-and-Go Meals program.

Groton Utilities proudly continues to sponsor the USS Groton Sail Foundation, Thames River Heritage Park Foundation as well as provide four $2,500 scholarships to Fitch Senior High School and Ella T. Grasso Technical High School. We also remain the primary sponsor of the annual Fairview Retirement Community Art of Chocolate fundraiser.

Going into the current year we have entered into agreements to be a primary sponsor of the Mystic Schooners baseball team as well as the primary sponsor of the Town of Groton Soundwaves summer concert series held every summer at Esker Point Beach.

- **Neighborhood Assistance Act:** Through the Neighborhood Assistance Act Groton Utilities and Bozrah Light and Power were able to assist non-profit entities through state tax-credits for energy conservation related projects for the following organizations:

  - Riverfront Children’s Center in Groton: $34,971.42 (Bozrah Light and Power)
  - Groton Parks and Recreation: $56,733.25 (Bozrah Light and Power)
  - Sacred Heart School in Groton: $145,714.24 (Groton Utilities)

In conclusion, we wish to acknowledge the cooperation received from all Utilities Department employees, Utility Commissioners, City Department Heads, City Council, and City Officials.

Respectfully submitted,

Keith Hedrick, Mayor
Chairperson

Ronald A. Gaudet
Director of Utilities