

**CITY OF GROTON UTILITIES COMMISSION  
WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY  
MEETING MINUTES**

**January 21, 2026 – 10:30 A. M.  
City of Groton Municipal Building  
Council Chambers**

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Chairperson, Mayor Jill Rusk

**Commissioners:** Jeffrey Godley, George Mathanool, George Scully, and Robert Zuliani

**Staff present:** Director of Utilities, Ronald A. Gaudet  
Executive Administrator, Maureen A. French  
Executive Administrative Assistant, Cynthia K. Trepanier  
Controller, Yi Xiang  
General Manager Electric Division, Bill Robarge  
General Manager Water Division, Mike Weber  
General Manager Business Development, Aaron Brooks  
General Manager Customer Service, Tina Daniels  
Manager Water-Wastewater, Joe Pratt  
Manager Water-Wastewater Engineering, Doug LaFontaine  
Manager Electric Operations, Jeremy Doucette  
Water Project Management Engineering Aide, Cesar Osuba  
Substation Foreman, Jeff Rose  
Line Foreman, Andy Blankenship  
Project Manager, Kelsey Odell  
Accounting Manager, Trish Thomas  
Electrical Engineer, Martin Cloudis

**1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Chairperson Rusk called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

**2. SAFETY MOMENT:**

A Safety Moment was shared by General Manager Robarge on the topic of “Driving Safety – Winter Driving on Site”.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A. Regular Meeting of December 17, 2025**

**Commissioner Godley** moved; **Commissioner Scully** seconded a motion to approve Minutes of Regular Meeting December 17, 2025

**Motion Carried – Votes: 5-0-0**

**4. APPROVAL OF TREASURER’S REPORT**

**A. Treasurer’s Report for December 2025**

**Commissioner Godley** moved; **Commissioner Zuliani** seconded a motion to approve Treasurer's Report December 2025

**Motion Carried – Votes: 5-0-0**

5. **COMMUNICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE**

The Commission received the following communications and correspondence: thank you note from Hope in Focus, thank you note from Fitch High School Athletic Hall of Fame, thank you note from Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce, thank you note from Mystic & Noank Library, and an acknowledgement of email received from Sam Spano dated, 01/20/2026.

6. **PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS**

Michael Boucher, 16 Hillside Avenue, Groton, CT 06340, addressed the Commission and said he has been submitting an increasing number of FOIA requests. The new information regarding the Seawall project is becoming increasingly concerning. The latest findings suggest that GZA, the contractor for the Seawall and the City were discussing Seawall design as early as January 2024—well before the bidding process began.

He stated that while it's unfortunate to see Groton Utilities potentially drawn into this issue, the fact remains that Groton Utilities played a significant role. One key question that needs resolution is the process for locating utility lines. There should be a strict, well-defined procedure that Groton Utilities follows for identifying utility lines, regardless of any objections from individuals who may not want this information disclosed. The process must be adhered to without exception.

He continued that he is not sure what procedures are currently in place but implementing a clear and consistent process should be a straightforward fix. It is unreasonable for Groton Utilities to be unable to locate its own utility lines during construction projects. This is an issue the City will continue to face, and there must be a firm, standardized procedure in place. Furthermore, this responsibility should remain with Groton Utilities and not be delegated to outside contractors—it needs to be managed internally.

7. **MONTHLY FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS**

Controller Xiang reviewed the monthly and year to date financials.

**ELECTRIC DIVISION**

**REVENUE:**

December Electric revenue of \$4.8M is 9.1% or \$399K higher than the budget and 9.9% higher than last December. The positive variance is driven by sales of residential and industrial, which exceed the budget by 11% and 14.5% respectively.

FYTD Electric revenue of \$27M is 6.8% or \$1.7M higher than the budget and 6.9% higher than last FYTD. The positive variance is driven by residential and industrial sales which exceed the budget by 5.6% and 15.5% respectively.

Heating degree days are 9% higher than last December and 18% higher than last FYTD. Cooling degree days are 26% less than last FYTD.

**O&M EXPENSES & NET INCOME:**

Operation & Maintenance (O&M) expenses of \$1M for December are 16.4% or \$204K lower than the budget; net income of \$295K for the month is \$77K lower than the budget. The unfavorable variance of net income is driven by over budget power cost offset by the over budget revenue and under budget O&M Expense.

FYTD O&M expenses of \$6.7M are 10.1% or \$775K below the budget and net income of \$2.4M for FYTD is \$560K greater than budget. The favorable variance in net income is driven by below budget O&M Expenses.

**CONSERVATION FUND (CLM):**

A total of 86K was billed to the customers for conservation charges and \$167K was spent on conservation rebates and related expenses for the month. At the end of the month, \$813K remaining funds are available on conservation account. \*The current CLM Rate of \$0.0025 per kWh has not changed since January 1, 2011.

**RATE STABILIZATION FUND (RSF):**

The total balance of the RSF is \$13.2M, which covers an estimated 4 months of CMEEC's forecasted power cost.

Commissioner Zuliani stated Controller Xiang gave a great report and for the first six months the Electric division is doing very well.

**WATER DIVISION**

**REVENUE:**

December Water revenue of \$1.1M is 8.2% or \$81K higher than the budget and 10.7% higher than last December. The positive variance is driven by industrial sales, which exceed the budget by 29.8%.

FYTD Water revenue of \$7.3M is 6.9% or \$467K higher than the budget and 9.4% higher than last FYTD. The sales of residential, industrial, and hydrants are greater than the budget while commercial sales and sales for resale are below the budget.

**O&M EXPENSES & NET INCOME:**

O&M expenses for December of \$822K are 7.2% or \$64K lower than the budget and the net loss of \$47K for the month is \$153K greater than the budget. The favorable variance in net income is driven by over budget revenue plus under budget O&M expenses.

FYTD O&M expenses of \$5M are 6.6% or \$352K below the budget and the net income of \$511K for FYTD is \$857K higher than the budget. The favorable variance is driven by over budget revenues plus under budget O&M expenses.

Controller Xiang added that although we did not meet the debt obligations, we will hopefully see improvement with the rate increase that began on January 1, 2026.

Commissioner Zuliani remarked that Controller Xiang's presentation was excellent. He noted that what stood out to him was December's performance: although we had predicted a substantial loss, it ended up being only 23%, which is far better than expected. While not meeting the long-term obligation is concerning, the year-to-date results are very strong—we anticipated a loss, yet we are generating income.

**SEWER DIVISION**

**REVENUE:**

December Sewer revenue of \$349K is 4.9% or \$18K lower than the budget but 7.9% higher than last December. The negative variance is driven by industrial sales, which are below the budget by 78%.

FYTD Sewer revenue of \$2.4M is 9.8% or \$215K greater than the budget and 20.9% higher than last FYTD. The positive variance is driven by industrial sales, which exceed the budget by 22.4%

**O&M EXPENSES & NET INCOME:**

O&M expenses of \$206K for December are 33.1% or 102K less than the budget. The net income of \$70K for the month is \$72K greater than the budget. The favorable variance of net income is driven by under budget O&M expenses offset by under budget revenues.

FYTD O&M expenses of \$2.6M for December are 14.8% or \$272 lower than the budget. The net income of \$382K for FYTD is \$411K greater than the budget. The favorable variance of net income is driven by over budget revenue plus under budget O&M expenses.

**8. PROJECTS/INITIATIVES UPDATE**

**A. Trimble Unity Presentation (CityWorks)**

Water Project Management Engineering Aide, Cesar Osuba presented an overview of Trimble Unity, an asset management system being implemented at Groton Utilities to consolidate water, sewer, and electric operations into a single platform. The system replaces multiple legacy systems with ESRI and Trimble Unity, allowing for better data integration, work order management, and historical tracking of asset activities. He explained that Water, Wastewater, and Electric currently operate in at least two different systems and access to needed records has not always been available. He also explained knowledge about issues across the system are sometimes only known to people who have retired, and the information has not always been passed down.

While the implementation is still in progress and facing some resistance, future capabilities include 3D mapping, worker/vehicle location tracking, and a new permit application portal that will allow customers to submit requests through a public access portal.

He explained that the system would allow for transition to a digital work order system that will integrate with GIS mapping- replacing paper-based processes. He reviewed how various water and sewer operations, including hydrant flushing and meter installations, are now being tracked electronically, with both time-saving benefits and additional data entry requirements. Commissioner Zuliani asked how the data is collected and how the system was selected. Director Gaudet explained that all workers have tablets in the field and data is inputted in real time. The Utility currently uses Trimble, but the format is not GIS. Director Gaudet said the cost is budgeted to update to the new Trimble System, it is paid on annual subscription, the current cost is between \$65K - \$75K and is based on the number of users.

General Manager Robarge further explained that all preventative maintenance will be tracked through this system, and all assets are being entered into the system as the substation upgrades are being made. He said it's a lot of work to get the information entered, but preventative maintenance will be well managed.

**B. Customer Service Status Update**

General Manager Daniels explained the new customer portal was scheduled to go live on January 13<sup>th</sup>. She said there are twenty-three steps to completing the conversion and on Step twenty-one an issue was identified. Customer information was not coming over because of a dash that was missing in the customer information. There are six thousand customers on auto pay and the correction was made to prevent those customers from having to go into re-setting up auto pay. The new go live date is set for January 27<sup>th</sup> which will allow the Bozrah billing

cycle for autopay to process to avoid any possible glitches. A test batch was run yesterday and there were only four errors. All customers will need to reset passwords, but that is all. Customers will be notified to reset passwords by text message blast. There will be no late fees assessed for January and February to allow for the conversion with no late fee impact to customers. Customers will not have the ability for e-bills for thirty days once autopay goes live to allow time to troubleshoot any potential issues. She said the new portal is very impressive.

Shifting the topic, General Manager Daniels informed the Commission that she has decided to take early retirement from Groton Utilities with her last planned day to be May 31<sup>st</sup>. She announced that she will be relocating to the Mid-West and wanted to leave enough time to backfill and train her position replacement. The Commission said she will be missed.

**C. Shore Avenue Update**

General Manager Weber reported that the sewer system for the project was restored during the first week of January, and both the gravity line and force main have been completed. The only remaining task for the Utility is the water main, which he said is still intact; it will be pressure-tested and then returned to service. A contingency plan is in place should any issues arise. He noted that the work should be fully completed within a few weeks. The contractor will then leave and return in the spring to install the sidewalks.

**9. OLD BUSINESS**

None

**10. NEW BUSINESS**

**CMEEC Update**

This item will stand on the agenda for updates starting next month. Director Gaudet will provide CMEEC updates. Mayor Rusk thanked Controller Xiang, General Manager Brooks, and Director Gaudet for accompanying her during her CMEEC introduction.

**11. Action Items**

- A. GUC-WPCA 26-01-01** Consideration of and action to authorize Groton Utilities Management to issue a purchase order to Gengras Ford, a state bid-list vendor contract 24PSX0110, 225 New Britain Avenue, Plainville, Connecticut, not to exceed Ninety-Six Thousand, Six Dollars and Ninety Cents (\$96,006.90) for one (1) 2025 Ford F-550 Regular Cab 4x4 with Switch and Go Unit Equipment to be paid from Water Budgeted Non-Bonded Capital Funds

**Commissioner Godley** moved; **Commissioner Mathanool** seconded a motion to approve Action Item GUC-WPCA 26-01-01

Manager Pratt explained the request and said the Water Department would like to purchase the Switch and Go Ford F-550 to replace the current two-wheel drive flat bed. The new truck will be purchased with a Mason dump and there is an option to get a flatbed that can be used with different units that will allow for versatility.

**Motion Carried – Votes: 5-0-0**

- B. GUC-WPCA 26-01-02** Consideration of and action to authorize Groton Utilities Management to issue a purchase order to Altec Industries, a member of Sourcewell, a Cooperative Purchasing Program, Contract Number 110421-ALT, 210 Inverness Center Drive, PO Box 11407, Birmingham, Alabama, for an amount not to exceed Two Hundred Sixty Thousand, Two Hundred Forty One Dollars and No Cents (\$260,241.00) to purchase a Bucket Truck, Altec

Model AT48M to be paid from FY26 Electric Capital Budget, and furthermore that the City Council be apprised of this action with the recommendation that it concur

**Commissioner Scully moved; Commissioner Mathanool** seconded a motion to approve Action Item GUC-WPCA 26-01-02

Electric Operations Manager, Jeremy Doucette presented a power point with the proposed unit which will replace a 2006 Electric Bucket Truck #68E. He said the new Altec AT48M bucket truck has already been built and is available for immediate purchase which would eliminate the average 24-36 month wait time for a new build. This specific vehicle has a 48' aerial lift with articulating boom that turns 180 degrees to put the worker in a better position to perform his/her duties. Groton Utilities has had the opportunity to use the truck as a demo. Manager Doucette said the truck will serve as a service truck and can also be used to do construction. Commissioner Scully asked for the status of the Digger Derrick that was previously approved by the Commission. Manager Doucette updated the Commission on vehicles that are currently ordered, the two squirt boom trucks ordered two years ago should be completed in April or May and delivered in July, and the Digger Derrick Commissioner Scully referred to is currently scheduled to be built in October or November with delivery in January 2027. Groton Utilities has secured build spots for an Altec TA55 for 2028 and a replacement Digger Derrick in 2028 as well. Altec is currently quoting all builds to take at least 36 months currently. By securing these two build spots, Groton Utilities will be able to adequately budget the spend and continue with the vehicle replacement plan.

**Motion carried – Votes: 5-0-0**

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, at 11:40 AM, **Commissioner Godley** moved, **Commissioner Scully** seconded a motion to adjourn.

**Motion carried – Votes: 5-0-0**

Attest:  
Cynthia K Trepanier  
Executive Administrative Assistant