

**Jonathan Helstrom**

General Manager

**Sue Sands**

Office Manager, Clerk

**Fred Page**

Water Superintendent

**Derek Dufour**

Wastewater Superintendent



Trustees

**David Martin**

Treasurer

**David Belyea, P.E.**

**Jay Kamm**

**Matthew Till**

## Caribou Utilities District

Water & Wastewater

P.O. Box 10 Caribou, ME 04736 (207) 496-0911

# Caribou Utilities District Board of Trustees Monthly Meeting Agenda

**Type:** Monthly Meeting, Board of Trustees

**When:** Wednesday, January 21, 2026 at 6:00 PM

**Where:** City Council Chambers, 25 High Street, Caribou, Maine

### **Agenda:**

#### **1. Appointment of Officers**

Appoint District Clerk, Elect President, Treasurer, and Assistant Treasurer FY2026

#### **2. Approval of Minutes**

Review and approval of the minutes from December 17, 2025 monthly meeting

#### **3. Financial Reports**

Budget and financial reports for period ending December 2025

#### **4. Multi Department Update**

Updates on matters related to both water and wastewater

#### **5. Water Department Update**

Updates on water-related matters, projects, and any relevant issues

#### **6. Wastewater Department Update**

Updates on wastewater-related matters, projects, and any relevant issues

#### **7. Other Business**

Fluoride Fact-Sheet

Lien Discharge

#### **8. Schedule Next Meeting**

Confirm next meeting, Wednesday, February 11, 2026

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# Monthly Management Report

**Meeting Month:** January, 2026

**Prepared By:** Jonathan Helstrom

**Agenda:**

## Appointment of Officers

### Appointment of 2026 Officers

If agreeable, I recommend that the Board proceed with appointing officers for 2026. Waiting until the Board is fully seated creates a risk that an issue requiring the Board President's signature could arise before the appropriate resolution is in place.

## Approval of Minutes

No additional comments on the December 17, 2025 monthly meeting.

## Financial Report

No additional comments on the financials through the end of December.

## Multi-Department Update

### Phone & Internet Transition

All infrastructure installation is complete. Fidium will schedule a cutover in the near future to integrate all phone and internet access.

### Solar Farm Savings

Chuck Kelley was hired to analyze CUD's solar performance and provided a spreadsheet with finalized 2024 billing data. His analysis shows that CUD realized approximately \$72,000 in savings from the solar project in 2024. The review indicates that kWh savings are less favorable

under the ES rate during periods of lower Standard Offer pricing and suggests potential optimization through adjustments to account cascades and rate classifications. He also identified potential opportunities for new, small-scale localized solar installations on low-usage accounts used primarily for instrumentation with minimal monthly power demand. This approach would involve disconnecting these accounts from the grid and supplying power through individual solar panels paired with onsite battery storage. Chuck is currently compiling 2025 billing data and will establish a process for CUD to internally track solar-related savings going forward.

## **Water Department Update**

### **Water Break Update**

The field crew did an outstanding job repairing two water main breaks on consecutive days on St. Anne Street and Hoover Avenue. The first repair extended until nearly midnight, followed by a second repair the following morning.

### **PUC Water Rate Adjustment**

The PUC approved the 1.5% water rate increase, effective January 22, 2026. Customers will begin to see the adjustment reflected on bills received in March.

### **NBRC Catalyst Grant**

The NBRC process is progressing as planned. I have signed the Local Development District contract with NMDC for grant administration, executed the NBRC grant award paperwork, and submitted all required documentation needed to receive a notice to proceed. The environmental review by NBRC is the final step remaining before the notice to proceed can be issued.

### **2027 Caribou Bridge Closure**

The proposed five-month bridge closure would require staff to use a significantly longer detour to access the water station, increasing travel time, fuel use, and labor costs. While manageable under normal operations, the increased travel time presents operational challenges, particularly during the summer construction season. One to two employees would spend roughly an additional hour per day traveling, resulting in an estimated five weeks of cumulative lost staff time over the closure period and reducing capacity for planned maintenance and capital work. The most significant concern is emergency response of CUD employees, as travel time to the water station would increase from approximately 6 minutes to as much as 30 minutes, potentially impacting timely response to critical water system events on the River Road or at the Water Station. I submitted comments to the DOT and have been involved with Aroostook Emergency Management local stakeholder meetings.

## **Wastewater Department Update**

### **FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant**

I received an update on January 13<sup>th</sup> from Christine Whelan at Maine Emergency Management

She stated; "FEMA is working through the final processing on this application and then the application will be submitted to [Department of Homeland Security] DHS for final agency review and approval. I unfortunately do not know how long the DHS review process will take, as all DHS grant projects nationwide with a federal share request over \$100,000 - \$999,999 are subject to DHS review and approval. As soon as I hear any updates, I will let you know."

#### **Congressionally Directed Spending Grant**

Senator Collins has confirmed that \$3.288 million for Caribou Utilities District's wastewater infrastructure project is included in the FY 2026 Interior and Environment Appropriations bill, which has passed both the House and the Senate and is now awaiting the President's signature, potentially as early as today, but more likely early next week. This is excellent news and will allow CUD to modernize multiple pump stations and make critical improvements to the aging headworks.

#### **Maine DOT Work, Route 1 over Prestile Stream**

CUD has received notice that, in the summer of 2027, Maine DOT plans to replace an aging culvert over Prestile Stream with a modern wildlife passage structure. A gravity sewer line is located within the project area and will be affected during construction, and the District has been asked to begin planning accordingly. At this stage, planning is limited until Maine DOT completes its preliminary design and provides additional details regarding the anticipated construction approach, scope of work, duration, and temporary traffic patterns. Early indications suggest this will be a substantial cost to the District, as the project may require opening approximately 600 to 1,200 feet of the site. Additional information will be provided to the Board as it becomes available.

#### **Other Business**

##### **Fluoride Removal Inquiry**

There are no new updates for this meeting. I am in the process of preparing a document that will outline the proposed next steps.

##### **Lien Discharge**

Sign three lien discharges.

#### **Schedule Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for February 11, 2026.

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General Manager

**Sue Sands**

Office Manager, Clerk

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Water Superintendent

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## Caribou Utilities District

Water & Wastewater

P.O. Box 10 Caribou, ME 04736 (207) 496-0911

The monthly meeting of the Caribou Utilities District was held Wednesday, December 17, 2025 in the City Council Chambers located at 25 High Street, Caribou, Maine.

### Trustees Present

David Martin, Treasurer

Jay Kamm, Trustee

Matthew Till, Trustee

David Belyea, Trustee,

### Others Present

Jonathan Helstrom, General Manager

Sue T Sands, Office Manager, District Clerk

Danielle Brissette, City Clerk

Trustee Jay Kamm opened the meeting at 6:00 PM. After reviewing the minutes of the November 12, 2025 meeting, David Belyea moved and David Martin seconded the motion to approve the minutes as presented. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

The Budget and Financial reports for November 2025 were discussed. Trustee Kamm was concerned if the District was aware of any larger items that might appear on the December budget reports. Sue explained that she felt the only items would be power for both divisions. The 4<sup>th</sup> quarter solar statement will not be received until after the first of the year and a general journal entry will be made to adjust and add totals to the December balance. The debt service for wastewater has a payment that will be made the end of December for the Grimes plant. Trustee Kamm questioned account number 425 and 413 for wastewater. The amount represents sale of vehicles, sale of equipment which no longer was being used, and the first quarter of 2025 included the balance of the wood harvested on the Grimes Road. David Martin moved and David Belyea seconded the motion to accept the Budget and Financial reports as presented. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED. Manager Helstrom reported that the 1.5% water rate increase was approved by the PUC 12/17/2025 and will be effective January 22, 2026. Manager Helstrom with the approval of the Trustees would like to put the 2<sup>nd</sup> River Road Crossing project out to bid after the first of the year.

The Water and Wastewater Budget for 2026 was discussed. Hopefully all maintenance on City streets was completed in 2025 which will help tremendously on proposed budget figures for 2026 indicating a more or less normal year. The main project for water will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> River Crossing. The funds have been approved by the State and only the closing for interim financing with the Bond Counsel needs to be completed. The \$1,000,000. grant awarded to the District recently will help cut the cost for this project tremendously. The 2006 Well Project loan on the River Road will be paid in full in April 2026. The

wastewater budget appears to have a slight deficit of \$18,200.00 which definitely will call for a rate increase in the fall of 2026. The last \$5.00 per year rate increase per customer for wastewater was in October 2025. Trustee Kamm noted he was not in the habit of voting on a negative deficit and using reserves for operating. Manager Helstrom explained that further discussion of the 2026 budget would be reviewed in executive session as requested by the Trustees.

David Belyea moved and Matt Till seconded the motion to go into executive session, Title 1, Chapter 13, Section 405A, Discussion or consideration of the employment, appointment, assignment, duties, promotion, demotion, compensation, evaluation, disciplining, resignation or dismissal of an individual or group of public officials, appointees or employees of the body at 6:20 P.M. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

David Martin moved and David Belyea seconded the motion to come out of executive session, Title 1, Chapter 13, Section 405A at 6:32 P.M. David Martin moved and David Belyea seconded the motion to accept the proposed 2026 Budget and Financial Reports for the Water and Wastewater but with a reduction of at least \$18,200. 00 on the wastewater side or whatever else the District can find at their discretion and notify the Trustees at the January 2026 meeting. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Manager Helstrom discussed the phone and internet transition now in progress with Fidium/Consolidated will have a cost saving for monthly communication expenses of approximately \$450.00. This update also includes the website to provide an overview of CUD's mission to safeguard public health, manage essential infrastructure, and support the City of Caribou's long-term growth.

NBRC Catalyst Grant of \$1,000,000 has been awarded to Caribou Utilities District. Trustee Kamm praised the effort of Manager Helstrom and Jim Lord for all their endeavors involved in the preparation of the application and noted that CUD was one of two Districts in the State of Maine to receive this award.

Based on recent communications from MEMA representative Christin Whelan and Anne Fuchs, FEMA has reviewed the amendment submitted the week of November 17<sup>th</sup> and issued and "Approved Pending Adoption" status. The final requirement is CUD's formal adoption of the 2021 Aroostook County Hazard Mitigation Plan. Jay Kamm moved and David Belyea seconded the motion as follows, NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY CARIBOU UTILITIES DISTRICT, THAT: section 1. In accordance with Caribou Utilities District bylaws, Caribou Utilities District adopts the December 17, 2025 amendment to the Aroostook County Hazard Mitigation Plan (2021 update). While content related to Caribou Utilities District may require revisions to meet the plan approval requirements, changes occurring after adoption, until plan expiration will not require Caribou Utilities District to re-adopt any further iterations of the plan. Subsequent plan updates following the approval period for this plan will require separate adoption resolutions. Passed and approved this 17<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2025, by the following authorized signatures of Caribou Utilities District, Matthew Till, Trustee, David Martin, Treasurer and Trustee, Jay Kamm, Trustee, and David Belyea, Assistant Treasurer and Trustee.

The fluoride removal inquiry was discussed. State law requires that such a change be approved through a municipal referendum. This question must be placed on the local ballot, and discontinuation may only occur if a majority of voters support it. David Belyea made a motion to move forward with necessary steps required for the removal of fluoride from the Caribou Utilities District. Trustee David Martin

indicated he would like to receive a fact sheet describing the issue in further detail at the January meeting before going to referendum. Therefore, motion made my Trustee Belyea was tabled.

Trustee Belyea discussed several sessions he attended at the 45<sup>th</sup> MRWA conference in Bangor December 9-11<sup>th</sup>, 2025, and indicated there are several smaller grants (\$10,000) available for security measures at our plants including fences, more cameras installed, etc. if we were to apply. Manager Helstrom filed applications for such grants, but with the condition the State and Federal Government is and has been in, the applications have all been held up from awarding the funds. David Belyea moved and David Martin seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 P.M. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED. The next scheduled Trustees meeting will be Wednesday, January 14, 2026 at 6:00 P.M. in the City Council Chambers at 25 High Street.

Sue T Sands, Office Manager, District Clerk

# December 2025 Profit & Loss

## Caribou Utilities District [Water Department](#)

REVENUE	Account	2025 Budget	Cumulative Total	% of Budget
Metered	461.0	\$895,000.00	\$884,425.72	99%
Public Fire Protection	463.0	\$352,344.00	\$352,344.00	100%
Lien Fees	476	\$500.00	\$0.00	0%
Miscellaneous Customer Service and Fees	0.00	\$15,000.00	\$16,475.17	110%
Other Income	474	\$15,000.00	\$12,165.10	81%
Earned Interest	419	\$5,000.00	\$12,335.40	247%
Lease Agreements	421	\$33,000.00	\$34,784.52	105%
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>		<b>\$1,315,844.00</b>	<b>\$1,312,529.91</b>	<b>100%</b>

EXPENSE	Account	2025 Budget	Cumulative Total	% of Budget
Administration Wages	601.80	\$199,000.00	\$218,881.87	110%
Field Wages	601.20	\$188,000.00	\$205,331.20	109%
Admin & General Expenses (Outsourcing)	620.70	\$12,000.00	\$13,201.60	110%
Admin & General Expenses (Office Supplies)	620.75	\$7,000.00	\$7,872.43	112%
Admin & General Expenses (Communication & Maintenance)	620.78	\$4,000.00	\$3,537.10	88%
Admin & General Expenses (Advertising)	620.79	\$1,500.00	\$354.32	24%
Admin & General Expenses (Travel, Education & License)	620.71	\$8,000.00	\$4,506.37	56%
Retirement (401a)	604.82	\$13,000.00	\$16,901.64	130%
Health Insurance & Stipend	604.81	\$83,000.00	\$79,095.31	95%
Payroll Tax	604.00	\$32,000.00	\$36,470.68	114%
Purchased Power (Plant Production)	615.10	\$71,000.00	\$58,660.79	83%
Purchased Power (Transmission & Distribution)	615.50	\$10,000.00	\$6,563.00	66%
Communication	616.00	\$2,000.00	\$4,374.93	219%
Chemicals	618.30	\$25,000.00	\$31,778.62	127%
Operations & Maintenance (Treatment)	620.20	\$8,500.00	\$22,593.55	266%
Operations & Maintenance (Transmission & Distribution)	620.60	\$30,500.00	\$52,617.10	173%
Laboratory Supplies & Testing	620.30	\$9,000.00	\$4,939.51	55%
Operation Tools and Equipment	620.50	\$7,500.00	\$8,461.64	113%
Contractual Services Engineering & Technical	620.26	\$10,000.00	\$1,022.50	10%
Contractual Services Accounting	632.00	\$6,400.00	\$11,375.00	178%
Contractual Services Legal	633.00	\$1,000.00	\$380.00	38%
Transportation	650.30	\$23,000.00	\$21,587.28	94%
Insurance (General Liability)	657.00	\$16,000.00	\$14,777.15	92%
Insurance (Workers Compensation & Unemployment)	658.00	\$6,000.00	\$1,207.68	20%
Bad Debt	670.00	\$500.00	\$772.38	154%
Heating	615.55	\$4,000.00	\$4,531.61	113%
Miscellaneous, Subscriptions, Dues & Regulatory Fees	675.50	\$27,000.00	\$18,435.80	68%
Utility Regulator Assessment Fees	408.10	\$8,500.00	\$7,868.00	93%
Tank Maintenance Fund	600.20	\$6,000.00	\$6,500.00	108%
Asset Replacement Reserve	341.10	\$33,000.00	\$24,000.00	73%
Garage & Office Roof Loan Payment	641.50	\$7,000.00	\$3,342.78	48%
<b>SUBTOTAL EXPENSE</b>		<b>\$859,400.00</b>	<b>\$891,941.84</b>	<b>104%</b>
Principal Payment (Long Term Debt Payments)	600.10	\$381,000.00	\$394,375.84	104%
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>		<b>\$1,240,400.00</b>	<b>\$1,286,317.68</b>	<b>104%</b>
<b>PROFIT (LOSS)</b>		<b>\$75,444.00</b>	<b>\$26,212.23</b>	

# Capital Reserve Accounts

Caribou Utilities District [Water Department](#)

Account Name	Account	December
Jet Truck	136-02	\$ 2,000.00
South Main Street	136-03	\$ 18,164.70
Well Project	136-05	\$ 93,305.66
USDA RD Refinance	136-06	\$ 17,402.55
High St	136-07	\$ 19,361.22
Coolidge Ave	136-08	\$ 20,927.44
North Main St and South Main St	136-09	\$ 53,579.03
Sincock St	136-14	\$ 24,065.88
Tank Project	136-22	\$ 12,473.49
Booster Station	136-24	\$ 7,679.41
Katahdin Trust Reserve	136-01	\$ 76,542.44
Katahdin Trust Reserve	136-02	\$ 84,868.43
Contingency	136-04	\$ 91,081.74
Short Lived Assets	136-15	\$ 11,471.32
CFCU CD	136-18	\$ 63,733.08
Account for Future Project	136-20	\$ 25.00
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$ 596,681.39</b>

# 2025 Capital Expense

Caribou Utilities District [Water Department](#)

EXPENSE TYPE	DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED COST	DECEMBER
Transportation	3/4 Ton Vehicle with Plow, 1/2 Service Box, 1/2 SUV	\$86,000.00	\$83,419.93
Treatment	PLC and SCADA Upgrade	\$80,000.00	\$102,643.80
Transmission & Distribution	Gate Box Repair Tops and Two Hydrants	\$15,000.00	\$0.00
Other	Computer Upgrades and Office Heat Pumps	\$17,000.00	\$13,029.34
	Meters	\$5,000.00	\$3,673.86
Transportation	1/2 Vacuum Truck (actual cost to CUD \$104,483.86)	\$230,000.00	\$229,713.25
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>		<b>\$433,000.00</b>	<b>\$432,480.18</b>

# December 2025 Profit & Loss

## Caribou Utilities District Wastewater Department

REVENUE	Account	2025 Budget	Cumulative Total	% of Budget
Treatment	401.0	\$760,000.00	\$780,617.06	103%
AWS Leachate	405.0	\$202,000.00	\$210,025.02	104%
Trucked Septage & Wastewater	405.1	\$5,000.00	\$3,730.78	75%
Stormwater	401.5	\$5,000.00	\$4,047.59	81%
Miscellaneous Service & Fees	425 & 413	\$15,000.00	\$49,723.10	331%
Earned Interest	415.0	\$14,000.00	\$11,163.65	80%
Garage & Office Roof Loan Payment	430.0	\$9,800.00	\$7,236.72	74%
Lease Agreements	404.0	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00	100%
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>		<b>\$1,035,800.00</b>	<b>\$1,091,543.92</b>	<b>105%</b>

EXPENSE	Account	2025 Budget	Cumulative Total	% of Budget
Administration Wages	701.00	\$144,000.00	\$147,424.80	102%
Field Wages	501.00	\$177,000.00	\$173,109.24	98%
Admin & General Expenses (Outsourcing)	702.00	\$12,000.00	\$12,420.11	104%
Admin & General Expenses (Office Supplies)	702.10	\$7,000.00	\$7,293.51	104%
Admin & General Expenses (Communication & Maintenance)	702.20	\$4,000.00	\$3,784.78	95%
Admin & General Expenses (Advertising)	702.25	\$1,500.00	\$809.08	54%
Admin & General Expenses (Travel, Education & License)	702.30	\$8,000.00	\$2,103.89	26%
Retirement (401a)	701.10	\$10,000.00	\$10,536.43	105%
Health Insurance & Stipend	715.00	\$83,000.00	\$80,273.97	97%
Payroll Tax	716.00	\$26,000.00	\$25,958.41	100%
Purchased Power (Treatment)	513.00	\$94,000.00	\$107,225.69	114%
Purchased Power (Pumping)	603.00	\$80,000.00	\$82,173.58	103%
Communication	503.00	\$2,500.00	\$4,759.07	190%
Chemicals	504.00	\$5,000.00	\$2,613.52	52%
Operations & Maintenance (Pumping)	603.10	\$10,000.00	\$12,747.14	127%
Operations & Maintenance (Treatment)	508.00	\$10,000.00	\$5,244.60	52%
Operations & Maintenance (Collection)	608.00	\$10,000.00	\$13,587.66	136%
Laboratory Supplies & Testing	507.00	\$22,000.00	\$18,201.20	83%
Operation Tools and Equipment	510.00	\$5,500.00	\$3,590.63	65%
Contractual Services Accounting	721.00	\$6,400.00	\$6,375.00	100%
Contractual Services Legal	750.00	\$2,000.00	\$1,026.00	51%
Contractual Services Engineering & Technical	521.00	\$10,000.00	\$6,257.52	63%
Transportation	506.00	\$23,000.00	\$18,275.20	79%
Insurance General Liability	711.10	\$17,000.00	\$18,280.35	108%
Insurance (Workers Compensation & Unemployment)	711.00	\$8,000.00	\$1,005.12	13%
Heating	509.00	\$5,500.00	\$5,883.59	107%
Miscellaneous, Subscriptions, Dues & Regulatory Fees	550.00	\$27,000.00	\$23,740.96	88%
Garage & Office Roof Loan Payment	741.50	\$2,800.00	\$1,320.03	47%
Asset Replacement Reserves	341.20	\$33,000.00	\$18,000.00	55%
<b>SUBTOTAL EXPENSE</b>		<b>\$846,200.00</b>	<b>\$814,021.08</b>	<b>96%</b>
Principal Payment (Long Term Debt Payments)	749.00	\$186,500.00	\$202,490.84	109%
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>		<b>\$1,032,700.00</b>	<b>\$1,016,511.92</b>	<b>98%</b>
<b>PROFIT (LOSS)</b>		<b>\$3,100.00</b>	<b>\$75,032.00</b>	

# Capital Reserve Accounts

Caribou Utilities District **Wastewater Department**

Account Name	Account	December
Jet Truck	107-60	\$ 2,000.00
Grimes Project	107-80	\$ 25,705.37
USDA RD Loan Payment Reserve	107-85	\$ 76,223.21
CFCU Money Market	104-11	\$ 94,775.40
ACFS&L Reserve	107-60	\$ 31,617.75
USDA RD Short Lived Asset Reserve	107-90	\$ 78,760.74
Katahdin Trust Reserve (Stormwater Account)	103-50	\$ 18,333.66
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$ 327,416.13</b>

# 2025 Capital Expense

## Caribou Utilities District Wastewater Department

EXPENSE TYPE	DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED COST	DECEMBER
Transportation	3/4 Ton Vehicle with Plow, 1/2 Service Box, 1/2 SUV	\$86,000.00	\$82,601.49
Treatment	Dissolved Oxygen & pH Meter and Probes	\$7,000.00	\$5,104.71
Pumping	Two Lift Station Pumps	\$12,000.00	\$0.00
Collection	Manhole Ring/Covers, Pro-Rings, Risers and Cones	\$12,000.00	\$32,971.18
Other	Computer Upgrades and Office Heat Pumps	\$17,000.00	\$13,029.34
	Garage Door Repairs	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
Transportation	1/2 Vacuum Truck (actual cost to CUD \$104,483.86)	\$230,000.00	\$229,713.25
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>		<b>\$366,000.00</b>	<b>\$365,419.97</b>