

**Jonathan Helstrom**  
General Manager  
**Sue Sands**  
Office Manager, Clerk  
**Fred Page**  
Water Superintendent  
**Derek Dufour**  
Wastewater Superintendent



**Caribou Utilities District**  
Water & Wastewater  
P.O. Box 10 Caribou, ME 04736 (207) 496-0911

Trustees

**David Martin**  
Treasurer  
**David Belyea, P.E.**  
**Jay Kamm**  
**Matthew Till**

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## Caribou Utilities District Board of Trustees Monthly Meeting Agenda

**Type:** Monthly Meeting, Board of Trustees  
**When:** Wednesday, February 11, 2026 at 6:00 PM  
**Where:** City Council Chambers, 25 High Street, Caribou, Maine

**Agenda:**

1. **Approval of Minutes**
  - Review and approval of the minutes from January 21, 2026 monthly meeting
2. **Financial Reports**
  - Budget and financial reports for period ending January 2026
3. **Multi Department Update**
  - Updates on matters related to both water and wastewater
4. **Water Department Update**
  - Updates on water-related matters, projects, and any relevant issues
5. **Wastewater Department Update**
  - Updates on wastewater-related matters, projects, and any relevant issues
6. **Other Business**
  - **Signing of Bank signature cards**
7. **Schedule Next Meeting**
  - Confirm next meeting, Wednesday, March 11, 2026

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## Monthly Management Report

**Meeting Month:** February, 2026

**Prepared By:** Jonathan Helstrom

**Agenda:**

### Approval of Minutes

No additional comments on the January 21, 2026 monthly meeting.

### Financial Report

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

### 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

As discussed last month, 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 \$86,000 in savings from the solar project in 2025.

#### Cancellation of PO Boxes

The two PO Boxes have been canceled, and all mail delivery has been transitioned to 176 Limestone Street effective January 26, 2026. This change was made to reduce annual Postal costs and to improve operational efficiency, as direct delivery to the office is more convenient than checking PO Boxes each day.

## **Water Department Update**

### Water Break Update

The field crew did an outstanding job repairing two water main breaks on consecutive days, similar to last month's events. The first break occurred on Garden Circle on a Sunday afternoon and extended into the night, followed by a second break on Carroll Street the following morning.

### NBRC Catalyst Grant

There have been no updates from NBRC on the environmental review, which is the final step remaining before the Notice to Proceed can be issued. There has been some back-and-forth communication between myself, Jim Lord, and the NBRC team regarding the environmental review that was previously completed. Initially, we were told the determination would be issued by the end of January; however, the most recent form email sent to all recipients indicated the determination is now expected by mid-February.

### 2027 Caribou Bridge Closure

Maine DOT has advised that the environmental and traffic-related analysis is still ongoing, including evaluation of potential alternatives to maintain traffic during construction. At this time, the project remains planned as a bridge rehabilitation with a full closure, and additional public information will be provided by DOT as more engineering work is completed. I will continue to stay engaged with Maine DOT and emergency management partners and will keep everyone informed as additional information becomes available.

### Fluoride Removal Inquiry

Please see the attached memo outlining my thoughts on CUD's involvement in the fluoride debate.

## **Wastewater Department Update**

### FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant

No new updates available.

### Congressionally Directed Spending Grant

No new updates available.

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

No new updates available.

## **Other Business**

### Bank Card Signatures

New bank signature cards will need to be completed to reflect the updated officers for FY 2026.

### Lien Discharge

Sign two lien discharges.

## **Schedule Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for February 11, 2026.

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The monthly meeting of the Caribou Utilities District was held Wednesday, January 21, 2026 in the City Council Chambers located at 25 High Street, Caribou, Maine.

Trustees Present

David Martin, Trustee  
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

Manager Helstrom called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM. Appointment of 2026 Officers for Caribou Utilities District was the first item on the agenda. David Martin moved and David Belyea seconded the motion to elect Jay Kamm as President for 2026. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED. President Kamm proceeded with the remainder of the meeting. David Belyea moved and Matthew Till seconded the motion to elect David Martin as Treasurer for 2026. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED. Jay Kamm moved and David Martin seconded the motion to elect Matthew Till as Assistant Treasurer for 2026. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED. David Belyea moved and Matthew Till seconded the motion to appoint Sue Sands to serve as District Clerk for 2026. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

After reviewing the minutes of the December 17, 2025 meeting, David Martin moved and David Belyea seconded the motion to approve the minutes as presented. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

The Budget and Financial reports for December 2025 were discussed. President Kamm questioned other amounts for 2025 which were not on the report but have been paid in 2026. Sue explained the large items included the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Solar Invoice as well as two large Versant amounts that had been paid for December. Trustee Belyea questioned Capital reserve funds available. David Martin moved and David Belyea seconded the motion to accept the reports as presented.

Manager Helstrom discussed the phone and internet transition and explained that Fidium would be scheduling the cutover in the near future.

Chuck Kelley of Kelley Industrial Electric of Limestone was hired to review the CUD Solar's performance and provided a valuable spreadsheet of 2024 and 2025 billing data. The District had a savings of approximately \$72,000 in 2024, and \$86,000 in 2025. The study suggested potential optimization through adjustments to account cascades and rate classifications. Mr. Kelley 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 would involve disconnecting these accounts from the grid and supplying power through individual solar panels paired with onsite battery storage.

Manager Helstrom discussed the NBRC Catalyst Grant and explained that the Environmental Review is the final step remaining before we receive the notice to proceed.

The 2027 Caribou Bridge Closure was discussed. Manager Helstrom has attended several meetings with the DOT and Aroostook Emergency Management stakeholders and submitted comments to the DOT regarding the concerns of the District during the closure. It will require a significantly longer detour to access the water station, an increase in fuel use as well as labor costs associated with the increased travel time.

FEMA is working through the final processing on the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant. All of the necessary documents have been submitted by the District, but now everything will be submitted to the Department of Homeland Security, (DHS) for final agency review and approval which could take several months.

The Congressionally Directed Spending Grant has been confirmed for the District in the amount of \$3.288 million for wastewater infrastructure for 2026. It has been passed both by the House and Senate and is now waiting for the President's signature.

The DOT is planning to replace an aging culvert over Prestile Stream in the summer of 2027. The District has a gravity sewer line located within the project area and will be affected during construction. Early indications suggest this will be a substantial cost to the District. Planning by the District is very limited at this time until Maine DOT completes its preliminary design and provides the District with anticipated construction approach, scope of work, duration, and temporary traffic patterns. The District will be receiving additional information once it is available.

There are no new updates regarding the fluoride removal from the District water supply. Manager Helstrom is in the process of preparing a document that will outline the proposed next steps. Trustee Martin suggested a video be made and put on our website showing how fluoride damages our equipment, and the potential hazard it has to our employees.

The next scheduled meeting will be Wednesday, February 11, 2026 at 6:00 P.M. in the Caribou City Council Chambers. David Belyea moved and David Martin seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 P.M. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Sue T Sands, Office Manager and District Clerk

# January 2026 Profit & Loss

Caribou Utilities District [Water Department](#)

REVENUE	Account	2026 Budget	2026 Cumulative Total	2025 Cumulative Total	% of Budget
Metered	461.0	\$900,000.00	\$69,872.53	\$70,581.54	8%
Public Fire Protection	463.0	\$357,600.00	\$29,362.00	\$29,362.00	8%
Lien Fees	476	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Miscellaneous Customer Service and Fees	0.00	\$16,000.00	\$1,813.65	\$1,845.32	11%
Other Income	474	\$15,000.00	\$0.00	\$375.00	0%
Earned Interest	419	\$6,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Lease Agreements	421	\$33,000.00	\$2,898.71	\$2,898.71	9%
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>		\$1,328,100.00	\$103,946.89	\$105,062.57	8%

EXPENSE	Account	2026 Budget	2026 Cumulative Total	2025 Cumulative Total	% of Budget
Administration Wages	601.80	\$217,000.00	\$16,746.79	\$24,364.47	8%
Field Wages	601.20	\$206,000.00	\$18,420.91	\$22,328.94	9%
Admin & General Expenses (Outsourcing)	620.70	\$15,000.00	\$1,053.04	\$219.00	7%
Admin & General Expenses (Office Supplies)	620.75	\$7,500.00	\$504.87	\$899.58	7%
Admin & General Expenses (Communication & Maintenance)	620.78	\$4,000.00	\$60.00	\$216.80	2%
Admin & General Expenses (Advertising)	620.79	\$1,000.00	\$29.75	\$61.25	3%
Admin & General Expenses (Travel, Education & License)	620.71	\$8,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Retirement (401a)	604.82	\$17,000.00	\$1,296.90	\$1,968.27	8%
Health Insurance & Stipend	604.81	\$88,000.00	\$4,632.48	\$10,744.85	5%
Payroll Tax	604.00	\$37,000.00	\$2,851.48	\$4,024.23	8%
Purchased Power (Plant Production)	615.10	\$66,000.00	\$0.00	\$5,617.91	0%
Purchased Power (Transmission & Distribution)	615.50	\$12,000.00	\$1,296.03	\$520.13	11%
Communication	616.00	\$4,500.00	\$178.80	\$0.00	4%
Chemicals	618.30	\$30,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Operations & Maintenance (Treatment)	620.20	\$9,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Operations & Maintenance (Transmission & Distribution)	620.60	\$31,000.00	\$548.00	\$0.00	2%
Laboratory Supplies & Testing	620.30	\$9,000.00	\$190.00	\$0.00	2%
Operation Tools and Equipment	620.50	\$7,500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Contractual Services Engineering & Technical	620.26	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Contractual Services Accounting	632.00	\$6,500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Contractual Services Legal	633.00	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Transportation	650.30	\$23,000.00	\$675.53	\$0.00	3%
Insurance (General Liability)	657.00	\$15,000.00	\$7,825.73	\$0.00	52%
Insurance (Workers Compensation & Unemployment)	658.00	\$5,000.00	\$1,019.76	\$0.00	20%
Bad Debt	670.00	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Heating	615.55	\$4,500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Miscellaneous, Subscriptions, Dues & Regulatory Fees	675.50	\$25,000.00	\$3,148.56	\$294.99	13%
Utility Regulator Assessment Fees	408.10	\$8,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Tank Maintenance Fund	600.20	\$6,000.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	8%
Asset Replacement Reserve	341.10	\$33,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	6%
Garage & Office Roof Loan Payment	641.50	\$7,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
<b>SUBTOTAL EXPENSE</b>		\$909,000.00	\$62,978.63	\$71,760.42	7%
Principal Payment (Long Term Debt Payments)	600.10	\$393,300.00	\$5,149.32	\$173,562.65	1%
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>		\$1,302,300.00	\$68,127.95	\$245,323.07	5%
<b>PROFIT (LOSS)</b>		\$25,800.00	\$35,818.94	(\$140,260.50)	

# January 2026 Profit & Loss

Caribou Utilities District **Wastewater Department**

REVENUE	Account	2026 Budget	2026 Cumulative Total	2025 Cumulative Total	% of Budget
Treatment	401.0	\$785,000.00	\$65,027.06	\$65,332.45	8%
AWS Leachate	405.0	\$213,000.00	\$14,368.63	\$0.00	7%
Trucked Septage & Wastewater	405.1	\$4,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Stormwater	401.5	\$4,000.00	\$340.72	\$524.19	9%
Miscellaneous Service & Fees	425 & 413	\$15,000.00	\$100.00	\$2,201.57	1%
Earned Interest	415.0	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Garage & Office Roof Loan Payment	430.0	\$9,800.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Lease Agreements	404.0	\$25,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>		<b>\$1,065,800.00</b>	<b>\$79,836.41</b>	<b>\$68,058.21</b>	<b>7%</b>

EXPENSE	Account	2026 Budget	2026 Cumulative Total	2025 Cumulative Total	% of Budget
Administration Wages	701.00	\$147,000.00	\$11,002.99	\$16,323.68	7%
Field Wages	501.00	\$176,000.00	\$11,476.02	\$22,377.11	7%
Admin & General Expenses (Outsourcing)	702.00	\$15,000.00	\$1,053.04	\$168.50	7%
Admin & General Expenses (Office Supplies)	702.10	\$7,500.00	\$347.30	\$696.03	5%
Admin & General Expenses (Communication & Maintenance)	702.20	\$4,000.00	\$0.00	\$156.80	0%
Admin & General Expenses (Advertising)	702.25	\$1,000.00	\$29.75	\$61.25	3%
Admin & General Expenses (Travel, Education & License)	702.30	\$8,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Retirement (401a)	701.10	\$11,000.00	\$807.06	\$1,196.84	7%
Health Insurance & Stipend	715.00	\$88,000.00	\$4,335.36	\$9,972.60	5%
Payroll Tax	716.00	\$26,500.00	\$1,780.71	\$3,309.19	7%
Purchased Power (Treatment)	513.00	\$110,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Purchased Power (Pumping)	603.00	\$90,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Communication	503.00	\$5,000.00	\$128.80	\$0.00	3%
Chemicals	504.00	\$3,500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Operations & Maintenance (Pumping)	603.10	\$15,000.00	\$109.42	\$220.05	1%
Operations & Maintenance (Treatment)	508.00	\$10,000.00	\$294.00	\$219.94	3%
Operations & Maintenance (Collection)	608.00	\$11,000.00	\$0.00	\$300.00	0%
Laboratory Supplies & Testing	507.00	\$15,000.00	\$0.00	\$163.29	0%
Operation Tools and Equipment	510.00	\$5,500.00	\$279.53	\$0.00	5%
Contractual Services Accounting	721.00	\$6,400.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Contractual Services Legal	750.00	\$2,000.00	\$48.50	\$0.00	2%
Contractual Services Engineering & Technical	521.00	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$800.00	0%
Transportation	506.00	\$23,000.00	\$12.50	\$26.50	0%
Insurance General Liability	711.10	\$18,500.00	\$9,564.77	\$183.50	52%
Insurance (Workers Compensation & Unemployment)	711.00	\$7,000.00	\$1,467.44	\$0.00	21%
Heating	509.00	\$5,500.00	\$651.77	\$0.00	12%
Miscellaneous, Subscriptions, Dues & Regulatory Fees	550.00	\$25,000.00	\$658.16	\$596.23	3%
Garage & Office Roof Loan Payment	741.50	\$2,800.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Asset Replacement Reserves	341.20	\$33,000.00	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	5%
<b>SUBTOTAL EXPENSE</b>		<b>\$882,200.00</b>	<b>\$45,547.12</b>	<b>\$56,771.51</b>	<b>5%</b>
Principal Payment (Long Term Debt Payments)	749.00	\$201,800.00	\$0.00	\$34,212.98	0%
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>		<b>\$1,084,000.00</b>	<b>\$45,547.12</b>	<b>\$90,984.49</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>PROFIT (LOSS)</b>		<b>(\$18,200.00)</b>	<b>\$34,289.29</b>	<b>(\$22,926.28)</b>	

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**To:** Board of Trustees

**From:** Jon Helstrom

**Date:** 2-4-2026

**Subject:** Fluoride Discussion: Timing, Public Perception, and District Neutrality

Trustees,

I would like to share my perspective regarding the potential discussion of fluoride at an upcoming Board meeting.

At this time, I have some hesitation about bringing this topic forward. Fluoridation has become increasingly public, emotional, and politically charged at both the state and national levels. While there are legitimate viewpoints on all sides, initiating or engaging in this discussion now could create the perception that CUD is taking a political or ideological position, regardless of our intent.

I am also concerned about how this discussion may be perceived by the public. Fluoride has been part of Caribou's water system since 1959 without prior controversy or formal action by the District. Even if the intent were informational, raising the issue now could lead to speculation about motive or suggest that the District is reconsidering a long-standing practice.

Recent developments demonstrate that fluoridation policy is increasingly being addressed through legislative, and regulatory frameworks rather than solely through local utility decision-making.

At the federal level, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced on January 22, 2026, that it is initiating an accelerated scientific review of fluoride in drinking water under the Safe Drinking Water Act to inform potential future guidance or regulatory action. While decisions regarding fluoridation remain local, this announcement reflects growing federal scrutiny and public attention on the issue.

At the state level, this shift was reflected in LD 1570 (HP 1028), "An Act to Prohibit Fluoridation of the Public Water Supply," introduced during the 132nd Maine Legislature, First Special Session. Although the bill did not advance and died, its introduction illustrates how fluoridation is increasingly being framed as a statewide policy issue rather than solely an operational utility matter.

While CUD actively manages the safety risks associated with fluoride handling through established protocols, the broader public debate is focused on perceived public health impacts related to consumption. Those issues fall outside CUD's operational role and expertise.

As a municipal utility, I believe it is important for CUD to remain neutral on matters that are primarily public health policy decisions unless directed otherwise by regulatory agencies, legislative action, or a formal request from the City Council or community members. Our role is to operate the water and wastewater systems safely, reliably, and in compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

For these reasons, my recommendation is that CUD remain neutral on the fluoride debate at this time and refrain from proactively engaging in discussion unless circumstances change.

I appreciate the Board's consideration and am available to discuss this further if helpful.

Respectfully,  
Jon