

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



**Caribou Utilities District**  
Water & Wastewater  
176 Limestone St., Caribou, ME 04736  
(207) 496-0911

Trustees  
**Jay Kamm**  
President  
**David Martin**  
Treasurer  
**David Belyea, P.E.**  
**Matthew Till**  
**Mark Draper**

---

# Caribou Utilities District Board of Trustees Monthly Meeting Agenda

**Type:** Monthly Meeting, Board of Trustees  
**When:** Wednesday, March 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 February 11, 2026 monthly meeting
2. **Financial Reports**
  - Budget and financial reports for period ending February 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**
7. **Schedule Next Meeting**
  - Confirm next meeting, Wednesday, April 8, 2026
8. **Approval of Minutes**
  - Review and approval of the minutes from February 11, 2026 monthly meeting

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



**Caribou Utilities District**  
Water & Wastewater  
176 Limestone St., Caribou, ME 04736  
(207) 496-0911

Trustees  
**Jay Kamm**  
President  
**David Martin**  
Treasurer  
**David Belyea, P.E.**  
**Matthew Till**  
**Mark Draper**

---

## Monthly Management Report

**Meeting Month:** March, 2026  
**Prepared By:** Jonathan Helstrom  
**Agenda:**

### Approval of Minutes

No additional comments on the February 11, 2026 monthly meeting minutes.

### Financial Report

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

### Multi-Department Update

#### 2025 Audit

The 2025 audit is currently underway. The auditors conducted their in-house review on February 10–11, and the remaining audit work is ongoing. At this time, it is anticipated, but not guaranteed, that the audit will be completed by the end of March.

### Water Department Update

#### Water Break Update, Lower Lyndon Street

At approximately 5:30 p.m. on Friday February 13th, after already completing a full workday, the crew was called in to respond to a major water leak on Lower Lyndon Street.

The first priority was to isolate and slow the leak. This required methodically shutting down and operating eight valves throughout the system in order to reduce water loss. While it is difficult to precisely quantify the leak, the water treatment facility was producing approximately 1,250 gallons per minute, and the storage tanks were rapidly losing volume. Tank levels dropped to

approximately 33 feet down to 6 feet from their normal operating level of 39 feet, before the leak was sufficiently controlled to allow the tanks to begin recovering. We estimate the total water lost to roughly one million gallons.

Once the system was stabilized, the crew moved into the excavation and repair phase. Upon uncovering the main, it was determined that the failure was caused by a complete structural failure of a 12-inch tee that had historically fed an abandoned early 1900s hydrant lateral.

The crew worked continuously until approximately 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, a total of roughly 18 hours, to complete the repair and restore system integrity, all while working in the dark in single-digit temperatures with wind chills below zero.

This level of dedication and professionalism ensured continued water service to the community and prevented what could have escalated into a much more significant service interruption. I want the Board to be aware of the crew's commitment and the quality of work performed under demanding conditions.

#### NBRC Catalyst Grant

There have been no updates from NBRC on the environmental review, which remains the final step required before a Notice to Proceed (NTP) can be issued.

Over the past two months, there has been ongoing back-and-forth communication between myself, Jim Lord, and the NBRC team regarding the environmental review that had already been completed. We were initially told that a determination would be issued by the end of January, which was later revised to mid-February, but as of today no final determination has been provided.

Despite the delay, we have reached a written consensus with NBRC allowing us to move the project out to bid, with the understanding that award and construction remain contingent on receiving the official NTP from NBRC. Given the timeline, this step is necessary; if we intend to have the project completed during the 2026 construction season, we cannot afford to delay advertising the bid any further.

#### 2027 Caribou Bridge Closure

Since last month's report, Maine DOT has advised that their design consultant completed a structural analysis and determined the bridge deck can be reconstructed in stages while maintaining a single 12-foot lane of alternating traffic during construction. As a result, the previously anticipated full bridge closure and detour through Fort Fairfield will not be necessary.

I will continue to stay engaged with Maine DOT and provide updates as additional information becomes available.

#### Fluoride Removal Inquiry

Please see the attached public notice that Washburn Water & Sewer provided to its customers

on February 17, 2026. I will follow up with Matt Palmer, their General Manager, after the March 16, 2026 public referendum to see what level of community engagement was encountered.

#### Heating System Replacement

Three bids were received for the replacement of the heating system at the shop building, ranging from \$42,420 to \$50,238. Jerry Castonguay Plumbing and Heating was the low bidder.

The project will involve installation of a new heating system consisting of three propane-fired ceiling hung heaters, a tankless propane hot water heater, and a heat pump with two interior heads. This system will provide more efficient and flexible heating through the use of multiple heat sources compared to the existing system.

Replacement of the current system is necessary because the existing single large hot air furnace has a burnt-out firebox and is obsolete. In addition, the current system is operationally complex, relying on multiple relays and a VFD. The new ceiling hung units will provide a more reliable and redundant heating system since heating will no longer depend on a single unit.

The tankless hot water heater will replace the existing oil-fired hot water tank, which is no longer operational due to deterioration of the tank. A tankless system is a better fit for this facility since hot water is only needed sporadically in the shop.

Lastly, the heat pump system will replace the electric baseboard heaters serving the office and training room, which are not energy efficient. The heat pump will provide both heating and cooling while improving overall energy efficiency for these spaces.

In conjunction with the installation of the new system, demolition and removal of the existing heating equipment will be completed by CUD staff to help reduce project costs.

#### **Wastewater Department Update**

##### Vacuum Truck Auction

We completed the sale of the old vacuum truck through a Municibid auction on February 11, 2026. The final sale price was \$25,000, which was less than originally hoped. However, the sale price was generally consistent with recent auction results for comparable trucks across the United States. It is worth noting that this particular chassis was a Sterling truck, a brand discontinued in 2009, which likely contributed to softer bidding due to concerns about long-term parts availability.

##### FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant

No new updates are available at this time. I also spoke with a neighboring district that has a smaller generator project funded through the same program that does not require approval from

Secretary Noem's office, and they reported there has been no movement from FEMA on their project either. This lack of activity may be related to the ongoing federal government shutdown, which has slowed processing of many FEMA grant programs. FEMA operates under the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, so broader funding or operational impacts affecting DHS can also affect FEMA program administration.

Congressionally Directed Spending Grant  
No new updates available.

Maine DOT Work, Route 1 over Prestile Stream  
I received verbal confirmation that the Maine DOT large scale animal passage culvert project on Route 1 over Prestile Stream, originally anticipated for 2027 and expected to involve a detour, and which would require a section of CUD's gravity sewer to be removed during construction, will likely be postponed until 2029.

### **Other Business**

No additional comments.

### **Schedule Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for April 8, 2026.

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



**Caribou Utilities District**  
Water & Wastewater  
176 Limestone St., Caribou, ME 04736  
(207) 496-0911

Trustees  
**Jay Kamm**  
President  
**David Martin**  
Treasurer  
**David Belyea, P.E.**  
**Matthew Till**  
**Mark Draper**

---

The monthly meeting of the Caribou Utilities District was held Wednesday, February 11, 2026 in the City Council Chambers located at 25 High Street, Caribou, Maine.

**Trustees Present**

Jay Kamm, President  
David Martin, Trustee  
David Belyea, Trustee  
Matthew Till, Trustee  
Mark Draper, Trustee

**Others Present**

Jonathan Helstrom, General Manager  
Sue T Sands, Office Manager, District Clerk  
Danielle Brissette, City Clerk

President Kamm called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM. The first item on the agenda was to welcome Mark Draper as a new Trustee of the District, and also to introduce Mr. Draper to the current Trustees.

After reviewing the minutes of the January 21, 2026 meeting, Matthew Till moved and David Martin seconded the motion to approve the minutes as presented. All Trustees voted in favor to accept the minutes, with one abstention, Mr. Draper.

Manager Helstrom discussed the new format of the 2026 Budget with the Trustees. The format will include the 2025 cumulative total of the budget for the same period on each line item, along with the 2026 monthly total for comparison. After reviewing, David Belyea moved and Matthew Till seconded the motion to accept the reports as presented. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Manager Helstrom reported to the Trustees that Fidium would be scheduling the cutover soon to complete the phone and internet transition for the office.

The District is working closely with Chuck Kelley of Kelley Industrial Electric of Limestone for potential optimization through adjustments to account cascades and rate classifications in order to improve the Solar performance of the District on the River Road. Since the recent study completed by Mr. Kelley indicated a savings of \$72,000 for 2024 and \$86,000 for 2025, the District will continue reviewing with Mr. Kelley 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.

There are no new updates with the NBRC Catalyst Grant application. Although the Environmental Review, which was previously completed, and also is the final step remaining before the Notice to Proceed can be issued, has had back-and-forth communication between Mr. Helstrom, Jim Lord, and the NBRC stating that more information is necessary before completion. Originally the District was told that the determination would be issued by the end of January, and now the most recent email states a mid-

February determination. Trustee Belyea would like Mr. Helstrom to set up a formal session with our engineer, Jim Lord to discuss this issue.

Trustee Belyea discussed the possibility of extending the water line further out South Main Street this summer once the DOT start their construction on the Prestile Stream project. With construction already in place at this location, Belyea felt it would be a perfect timing for the District to extend the main if possible. Mr. Helstrom felt this was an excellent suggestion and will look into it further.

Two sewer liens were signed by the Treasurer and new signature cards were signed by the dedicated signers of the District.

There are no new updates regarding the fluoride removal from the District water supply. Manager Helstrom would like to share his perspective regarding the potential discussion of discontinuing fluoride treatment at our River Road plant at an upcoming Board meeting. Mr. Helstrom is concerned about how this discussion may be perceived by the public since it has been a part of Caribou's water system since 1959. David Belyea moved and David Martin seconded the motion to table the fluoride issue at this time. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Trustee Martin suggested having the office do courtesy calls monthly to all individuals with disconnection notices before water is actually shut off. With an average of 84 monthly notices being sent out, (91 actually mailed for month of February) it was decided that customers can arrange their personal payments without further notice from the office.

The next scheduled meeting will be Wednesday, March 11, 2026 at 6:00 PM in the Caribou City Council Chambers. David Belyea moved and Matthew Till seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:20 PM.

Sue T Sands, Office Manager

# February 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	\$139,393.00	\$139,981.19	15%
Public Fire Protection	463.0	\$357,600.00	\$58,724.00	\$58,724.00	16%
Lien Fees	476	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Miscellaneous Customer Service and Fees	0.00	\$16,000.00	\$0.00	\$3,620.02	0%
Other Income	474	\$15,000.00	\$4,083.85	\$797.10	27%
Earned Interest	419	\$6,000.00	\$1,009.76	\$660.06	17%
Lease Agreements	421	\$33,000.00	\$5,797.42	\$5,797.42	18%
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>		<b>\$1,328,100.00</b>	<b>\$209,008.03</b>	<b>\$209,579.79</b>	<b>16%</b>

EXPENSE	Account	2026 Budget	2026 Cumulative Total	2025 Cumulative Total	% of Budget
Administration Wages	601.80	\$217,000.00	\$32,610.29	\$37,892.57	15%
Field Wages	601.20	\$206,000.00	\$34,654.88	\$38,272.20	17%
Admin & General Expenses (Outsourcing)	620.70	\$15,000.00	\$1,529.86	\$1,293.73	10%
Admin & General Expenses (Office Supplies)	620.75	\$7,500.00	\$931.82	\$1,587.20	12%
Admin & General Expenses (Communication & Maintenance)	620.78	\$4,000.00	\$340.60	\$1,321.61	9%
Admin & General Expenses (Advertising)	620.79	\$1,000.00	\$59.50	\$91.00	6%
Admin & General Expenses (Travel, Education & License)	620.71	\$8,000.00	\$171.10	\$1,148.96	2%
Retirement (401a)	604.82	\$17,000.00	\$2,593.80	\$3,232.05	15%
Health Insurance & Stipend	604.81	\$88,000.00	\$13,899.74	\$15,821.44	16%
Payroll Tax	604.00	\$37,000.00	\$5,452.76	\$6,558.32	15%
Purchased Power (Plant Production)	615.10	\$66,000.00	\$9,471.48	\$11,672.03	14%
Purchased Power (Transmission & Distribution)	615.50	\$12,000.00	\$2,526.71	\$1,075.39	21%
Communication	616.00	\$4,500.00	\$600.96	\$326.88	13%
Chemicals	618.30	\$30,000.00	\$6,572.49	\$6,369.19	22%
Operations & Maintenance (Treatment)	620.20	\$9,000.00	\$150.77	\$305.80	2%
Operations & Maintenance (Transmission & Distribution)	620.60	\$31,000.00	\$1,068.32	\$873.49	3%
Laboratory Supplies & Testing	620.30	\$9,000.00	\$889.11	\$170.00	10%
Operation Tools and Equipment	620.50	\$7,500.00	\$0.00	\$769.40	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	\$97.50	\$19.00	10%
Transportation	650.30	\$23,000.00	\$1,355.44	\$2,828.48	6%
Insurance (General Liability)	657.00	\$15,000.00	\$7,825.73	\$0.00	52%
Insurance (Workers Compensation & Unemployment)	658.00	\$5,000.00	\$1,179.76	(\$1,211.18)	24%
Bad Debt	670.00	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Heating	615.55	\$4,500.00	\$718.70	\$2,244.53	16%
Miscellaneous, Subscriptions, Dues & Regulatory Fees	675.50	\$25,000.00	\$5,011.06	\$3,355.96	20%
Utility Regulator Assessment Fees	408.10	\$8,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Tank Maintenance Fund	600.20	\$6,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	17%
Asset Replacement Reserve	341.10	\$33,000.00	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00	12%
Garage & Office Roof Loan Payment	641.50	\$7,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
<b>SUBTOTAL EXPENSE</b>		<b>\$909,000.00</b>	<b>\$134,712.38</b>	<b>\$141,018.05</b>	<b>15%</b>
Principal Payment (Long Term Debt Payments)	600.10	\$393,300.00	\$26,721.89	\$173,562.65	7%
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>		<b>\$1,302,300.00</b>	<b>\$161,434.27</b>	<b>\$314,580.70</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>PROFIT (LOSS)</b>		<b>\$25,800.00</b>	<b>\$47,573.76</b>	<b>(\$105,000.91)</b>	

# February 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	\$129,787.63	\$128,085.94	17%
AWS Leachate	405.0	\$213,000.00	\$19,392.37	\$20,796.79	9%
Trucked Septage & Wastewater	405.1	\$4,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Stormwater	401.5	\$4,000.00	\$681.44	\$864.91	17%
Miscellaneous Service & Fees	425 & 413	\$15,000.00	\$25,100.00	\$15,264.89	167%
Earned Interest	415.0	\$10,000.00	\$429.60	\$396.23	4%
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>\$175,391.04</b>	<b>\$165,408.76</b>	<b>16%</b>

EXPENSE	Account	2026 Budget	2026 Cumulative Total	2025 Cumulative Total	% of Budget
Administration Wages	701.00	\$147,000.00	\$21,740.98	\$27,133.69	15%
Field Wages	501.00	\$176,000.00	\$23,127.89	\$37,262.92	13%
Admin & General Expenses (Outsourcing)	702.00	\$15,000.00	\$1,529.86	\$1,243.23	10%
Admin & General Expenses (Office Supplies)	702.10	\$7,500.00	\$1,178.06	\$1,475.47	16%
Admin & General Expenses (Communication & Maintenance)	702.20	\$4,000.00	\$216.60	\$528.09	5%
Admin & General Expenses (Advertising)	702.25	\$1,000.00	\$59.50	\$91.00	6%
Admin & General Expenses (Travel, Education & License)	702.30	\$8,000.00	\$0.00	\$513.38	0%
Retirement (401a)	701.10	\$11,000.00	\$1,614.12	\$2,015.76	15%
Health Insurance & Stipend	715.00	\$88,000.00	\$12,889.66	\$14,668.57	15%
Payroll Tax	716.00	\$26,500.00	\$3,549.17	\$5,493.49	13%
Purchased Power (Treatment)	513.00	\$110,000.00	\$13,209.92	\$17,988.00	12%
Purchased Power (Pumping)	603.00	\$90,000.00	\$9,061.13	\$7,008.37	10%
Communication	503.00	\$5,000.00	\$541.78	\$385.96	11%
Chemicals	504.00	\$3,500.00	\$1,195.90	\$0.00	34%
Operations & Maintenance (Pumping)	603.10	\$15,000.00	\$2,794.71	\$1,071.37	19%
Operations & Maintenance (Treatment)	508.00	\$10,000.00	\$822.92	(\$3,942.18)	8%
Operations & Maintenance (Collection)	608.00	\$11,000.00	\$5,331.74	\$5,034.04	48%
Laboratory Supplies & Testing	507.00	\$15,000.00	\$141.28	\$210.02	1%
Operation Tools and Equipment	510.00	\$5,500.00	\$279.53	\$576.86	5%
Contractual Services Accounting	721.00	\$6,400.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Contractual Services Legal	750.00	\$2,000.00	\$171.00	\$19.00	9%
Contractual Services Engineering & Technical	521.00	\$10,000.00	\$1,750.00	\$800.00	18%
Transportation	506.00	\$23,000.00	\$726.46	\$5,463.78	3%
Insurance General Liability	711.10	\$18,500.00	\$9,564.77	\$183.50	52%
Insurance (Workers Compensation & Unemployment)	711.00	\$7,000.00	\$1,627.44	(\$2,707.32)	23%
Heating	509.00	\$5,500.00	\$2,211.99	\$2,248.60	40%
Miscellaneous, Subscriptions, Dues & Regulatory Fees	550.00	\$25,000.00	\$770.66	\$2,605.20	3%
Garage & Office Roof Loan Payment	741.50	\$2,800.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Asset Replacement Reserves	341.20	\$33,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$4,000.00	9%
<b>SUBTOTAL EXPENSE</b>		<b>\$882,200.00</b>	<b>\$119,107.07</b>	<b>\$131,370.80</b>	<b>14%</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>\$119,107.07</b>	<b>\$165,583.78</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>PROFIT (LOSS)</b>		<b>(\$18,200.00)</b>	<b>\$56,283.97</b>	<b>(\$175.02)</b>	

# Washburn Water & Sewer District

---

22 Hilt Street  
Washburn, Maine  
04786  
207-455-1042

[wsdmanager@washburnmaine.org](mailto:wsdmanager@washburnmaine.org)

February 17, 2026

## **Washburn Water & Sewer District**

22 Hilt Street  
Washburn, Maine 04786  
207-455-1042

### **Dear Residents of Washburn,**

The Washburn Water & Sewer District Board of Trustees would like to inform you that a ballot referendum will be held on removing sodium fluoride from our public water system.

This vote will take place on March 16, 2026, at the Washburn Town Office, allowing the citizens of Washburn to decide whether the District should discontinue adding sodium fluoride to the drinking water supply.

---

## **Why This Question Is Being Brought Forward**

The Board has carefully reviewed the operational, safety, financial, and regulatory aspects of continuing fluoridation. After thorough consideration, we believe it is appropriate to allow residents to decide whether this additive should remain part of our treatment process.

### **1. Employee Safety Concerns**

Sodium fluoride is classified as a hazardous chemical. Although it is approved for use in drinking water treatment when properly handled, it poses occupational hazards during:

- Delivery and unloading
- Storage and handling
- Mixing and feed system maintenance
- Spill response and cleanup

Exposure risks may include respiratory and skin/eye irritation, as well as other health effects, if not handled under strict safety protocols. Handling requires personal protective equipment (PPE), specialized training, chemical containment measures, and compliance with safety regulations.

Reducing the use of hazardous treatment chemicals decreases the risk to operators and limits workplace exposure concerns.

---

## **2. Public Safety and Liability Considerations**

Although fluoride is added at regulated levels, it remains a chemical additive requiring:

- Precise metering equipment
- Ongoing calibration and monitoring
- Chemical storage safeguards
- Spill prevention and reporting compliance

Mechanical failure, feed pump malfunction, or operator error—though rare—can result in overfeed or underfeed. Eliminating fluoridation removes the risk of accidental overfeed and reduces associated liability exposure for the District and the community.

---

## **3. Infrastructure and Cost Factors**

Fluoridation systems require:

- Dedicated feed equipment
- Ongoing maintenance and replacement parts
- Chemical purchasing and transport
- Regulatory monitoring and testing

As infrastructure ages, replacement and repair costs rise. Discontinuing fluoridation would reduce operational complexity and long-term maintenance costs for the utility.

---

## **4. Personal Choice Consideration**

Some residents prefer to make individual decisions about fluoride intake from dental products or supplements. A referendum allows the community to decide whether fluoride addition should continue at the municipal level.

---

## What This Referendum Means

If the ballot measure passes:

- Sodium fluoride will no longer be added to the Washburn public water supply.
- The water will continue to meet all federal and state drinking water safety standards under the oversight of the Maine Drinking Water Program and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

If the ballot measure does not pass:

- Fluoridation will continue under current operational procedures and regulatory requirements.

---

## Commitment to Safe Drinking Water

Regardless of the outcome of this vote, the Washburn Water & Sewer District remains committed to the following:

- Providing safe, reliable drinking water
- Meeting or exceeding all regulatory standards
- Protecting public health
- Maintaining transparency with our residents

We encourage all residents to stay informed and participate in this important community decision.

If you have questions, please contact the District office at 207-455-1042.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt Palmer", written over a horizontal line.

Matt Palmer

**Washburn Water & Sewer District Board of Trustees**  
Washburn, Maine