

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, March 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
Danielle Brissette, City Clerk

Absent; Sue T Sands, Office Manager, District Clerk

President Kamm called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. After reviewing the minutes of the February 11, 2026 meeting, David Belyea moved and David Martin seconded the motion to approve the minutes as presented. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED. After reviewing the Budget and Financial Reports for February 2026, David Martin moved and Matthew Till seconded the motion to accept the reports as presented. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

The 2025 Audit is still underway by Chester M. Kearney, Certified Public Accountants of Presque Isle Maine. Four auditors were at the office February 11th and 12th reviewing all inhouse Financial information for the year, and hopefully all adjusting entries will be available by March 31, 2026.

Manager Helstrom discussed a major water main break on Lyndon Street February 13th which took the field crew throughout the night to repair. The crew did an amazing job of solving the problem, and it's a great asset for the District to have such dedicated and professional employees who know what to do and how to go about repairing an issue such as this. The main break brought out some issues that have been discussed in the past regarding old redundant lines that actually are no longer needed. The District will be discussing with Jim Lord a plan to eliminate some of those really old cast iron lines.

At the time the February packet was put together for the meeting, no updates had been received regarding the NBRC Grant application. However, since then we were notified that there was a missing document to the public stating that we were working in a flood zone. The document was found, and submitted, and we have been notified from the local representative working on the Grant that we should receive a notice shortly to proceed. Since receiving the above information, the bids for the project were submitted on Thursday March 12, 2026 with a deadline of April 8, 2026 which will be the date of the next Trustees meeting. At the meeting, Jim Lord of Dirigo Engineering will be attending to review any questions The Trustees might have regarding projects.

Since the last Trustees meeting, Maine DOT has 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 the construction. This was excellent news received by everyone since there were many concerns regarding the closing. Hopefully, nothing will change regarding this plan.

Manager Helstrom met with Matt Palmer, General Manager of the Washburn Water and Sewer District recently regarding a ballot referendum to be held March 16, 2026 concerning the removal of sodium fluoride from their public water system. After the referendum, Mr. Helstrom will discuss with Matt and see what level of community engagement was encountered since this has been an ongoing topic for Caribou Utilities District.

With the failing heating system at the Water garage, three bids were received for the replacement ranging from \$42,420 to \$50,238. Jerry Castonguay Plumbing and Heating of Washburn Maine was the low bidder. The CUD staff began demolition and removal of the existing heating equipment on Thursday, March 12, 2026. By having the field staff of the District to complete this portion of the project will reduce project costs tremendously.

The wastewater 2008 Sterling Vacuum Truck was sold through Municibid Auction, February 11, 2026 to a local bidder, Kevin Tompkins of Presque Isle Maine in the amount of \$25,000. Since the particular chassis for this truck was discontinued in 2009, the sale price was generally consistent with recent auction results for comparable trucks across the United States.

Manager Helstrom reached out to Trisha House at Susan Collins office after the packet had been sent regarding the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant. She responded that the issue had been sent to the legal staff of FEMA asking for a status update on all main hazardous mitigation projects over \$100,000 that are subject to the enhanced review at FEMA. This included the HMGP application for Caribou Utilities District. We were told that these projects have cleared, however, the government shut-down has slowed down announcements and congressional notification. Everything is on the desk in Washington, but it's been approved for distribution. Hopefully once the government is fully staffed in all departments, we will be getting our awards.

There are no new updates for the Fiscal Year 2026 application for the Congressionally Directed Spending Grant, however it was suggested the District approve a letter for application for Fiscal Year 2027 funding showing full support for the Aroostook River Wastewater Force Main Redundancy Project. David Belyea moved and Mark Drapler seconded the motion to support this project and to authorize the District to provide the required matching funds, through non-federal sources, including state infrastructure programs and/or municipal financing. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED. This commitment reflects the Board's strong support for improving the reliability and resiliency of the District's wastewater infrastructure and protecting the water quality of the Aroostook River. Manager Helstrom has reached out to three of the individuals who supported the District on the first loan application, and they are willing to do additional letters of support for the District for the Fiscal Year 2027.

Maine DOT has decided to set aside the Route 1 over Prestile Stream project which would require a section of CUD's gravity sewer line to be removed during construction until 2029. This will allow the District additional time to think about the best approach for our sewer line during this construction.

David Martin moved and David Belyea seconded the motion to change the time for the Trustee's meetings to 5:30 PM rather than 6:00 PM moving forward. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED. One lien was also signed for discharge by Treasurer Martin.

Mark Draper moved and David Martin seconded the motion to move into Executive Session, pursuant to Title 1, MRS 405 6C, to discuss negotiations related to a potential contract to provide services to a neighboring community where premature public disclosure could prejudice the District's bargaining position at 6:26 PM. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED. Mark Draper moved and David Martin seconded the motion to come out of Executive Session, pursuant to Title 1, MRS 405 6C at 6:45 PM. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED. The next scheduled meeting will be Wednesday, **April 8, 2026 at 5:30 PM.** David Belyea moved and David Martin moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 PM. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

General Manager Jon Helstrom