

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, August 12, 2026 in the City Council Chambers located at 25 High Street, Caribou, Maine.

Trustees Present

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

Others Present

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

President Jay Kamm called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM. After reviewing the minutes of the July 8, 2026 meeting, David Martin moved and Mark Draper seconded the motion to approve the minutes as presented. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED. The Financial and Budget reports were reviewed with the Trustees. Sue explained that the month of July had three payrolls indicating a slight increase in Administrative and Field wages, and also the Property and Casualty Insurance with Maine Municipal Association was slightly increased due to additional equipment being added. David Belyea moved and Mark Draper seconded the motion to accept the reports as presented. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Since the last meeting Manager Helstrom has been exploring options for recording Cud's public meetings at the District's conference room located at 176 Limestone Street rather than having a City employee come back in to work to set the equipment up for the CUD meetings at 5:30 PM, and then to remain on site until the meeting is adjourned in order to lock the office up for the night. The District greatly appreciates all of the effort and time provided by the City of Caribou in order to enable the District to hold the monthly meetings in the Council Chambers. It appears that a relatively simple video and audio recording system could be purchased with an estimated cost of approximately \$1,800.00. A motion was made and seconded to purchase the equipment, but after discussion, an amended motion was made by Mark Draper and seconded by Jay Kamm to authorize Manager Helstrom to move forward and purchase the equipment, have it installed and tested during the month of September, and possibly go online for the October meeting. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Due to the following recent Federal warnings and active security breaches of several of Maine's water and wastewater utilities, CUD has partnered with the Maine Drinking Water Program and cybersecurity specialists with the US Army National Guard to conduct a cybersecurity audit of our facilities in the coming months. The audit will be covered by a Grant offered by the Drinking Water Program and this review will provide an independent assessment of our existing systems and practices, help identify potential vulnerabilities, and provide recommendations for improvements. The District will continue coordinating with our IT provider and regulatory partners as recommendations are developed. The District would rather take a proactive rather than reactive approach to cybersecurity and identify reasonable improvements before a problem occurs.

The Water Main River Crossing project is approximately 40% complete at this time. The contractor is expected to return in force around August 17. Work completed during this period included approximately 805 feet of new water main, 823 cubic yards of ledge excavation, 1,600 feet of trench insulation, three trench relief drains, one hydrant, and three gate valves. The installed main has successfully passed leakage testing.

The leak detection procurement process has been completed. The equipment has now been installed throughout the distribution system with the sensors actively monitoring for potential leaks and collecting data. The initial results will be reviewed in the coming weeks to identify potential leaks that may warrant further investigation. The Drinking Water Program recently determined that these leak detection improvements are eligible expenses under the SRF program. As a result, approximately 35% of the project cost will be covered through SRF principal forgiveness, allowing the District to maximize the available funding while improving our ability to proactively identify leaks, reduce water loss, and help CUD identify areas of the distribution system where aging or problematic water mains should be prioritized for future replacement.

Over the past several months the District has been researching the process required to discontinue fluoridation of the municipal water supply. The project has proven to be more involved than initially anticipated, and the District has been working with legal counsel and the City to better understand the State requirements and municipal election process. Since the District missed the deadline by the City of Caribou for the November ballot, the item would need to be added to the agenda at a City Council meeting for discussion and authorization by the Council members. Legal counsel is currently consulting with the Maine Municipal Association to further clarify the statutory and procedural requirements for moving the issue forward.

The Generator Replacement project is continuing to move forward. SRF has assigned a project manager who will be reviewing the draft documents the week of August 10, 2026, and once this is completed, the project is expected to be advertised for construction. The first requisition has been submitted to FEMA for costs incurred to date. The District recently was notified by FEMA that they have awarded CUD \$12,612.50 to cover eligible grant administration expenses at 100% federal funding with no local match required.

The District submitted a loan application in June, after approval by the Board of Trustees, to the Maine Municipal Bond Bank for up to \$1.7 million in CWSRF funding for Wastewater infrastructure. Recently an update was received from MMBB that the application was in their queue for underwriting review, and after preliminary studies of the documentation submitted, everything appears to be in order. Once the underwriting is complete, MMBB staff will make a recommendation to the MMBB Board regarding approval of the loan. David Belyea moved and Matt Till seconded the motion to authorize the opening of a dedicated Project Account for the Wastewater Division at Aroostook County Federal Savings and Loan. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

As previously reported, the District received a \$3.288 million FY2026 EPA Community Grant for wastewater infrastructure improvements. Initially, the District planned to use the \$1.7 million CWSRF financing for engineering services, however after discussions with the funding agencies and Dirigo Engineering it became apparent that doing so could limit our ability to count those engineering costs toward the required EPA non-federal match. The decision was made to procure engineering services for the entire project through a qualifications-based RFQ process. A total of four engineering firms obtained the RFQ package, however, Dirigo Engineering was the only firm to submit a Statement of

Qualifications and scored in accordance with the RFQ requirements. Dirigo was determined to be compliant, and subsequently selected to provide engineering and design services on the project.

A formal cost-share waiver request and supporting Census documentation has been submitted to EPA. On August 12, 2026, the District was notified that the waiver had been granted. This waiver will ultimately eliminate the local match requirement associated with the \$3.288 million federal award. However, by the District completing the RFQ process, it still will provide the District with maximum flexibility in how engineering and other project costs are funded as the project progresses.

During the week of August 17, 2026, CUD & Dirigo will hold a project kickoff meeting to establish the project scope, top priorities for the project, schedule, and next steps.

Mark Draper moved and David Martin seconded the motion to go into Executive Session, Title 1, Chapter 13, Section 405, 6A, Personnel issues at 6:00 PM. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED. David Martin moved and Mark Draper seconded the motion to move out of Executive Session, Title 1, Chapter 13, Section 405 6A, Personnel Issues at 6:08 PM. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

David Belyea moved and David Martin seconded the motion to go into Executive Session at 6:10 PM, Title 1, Chapter 13, Section 405, 6C, Discussion or consideration of the condition, acquisition or the use of real or personal property permanently attached to real property. (Lease) UNANIMOUSLY VOTED. Mark Draper moved and Matthew Till seconded the motion to move out of Executive Session at 6:30 PM, Title 1, Chapter 13, Section 405, 6C, Discussion or consideration of the condition, acquisition or the use of real or personal property permanently attached to real property. (Lease) UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Mark Draper moved and David Belyea seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 PM. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED. The next scheduled meeting of the District will be Wednesday, September 9, 2026 at 25 High Street, Caribou, Maine, beginning at 5:30 PM

Sue T. Sands, Office Manager, District Clerk