

**Catskill Watershed Corporation  
Septic Committee Meeting  
January 6, 2026  
Minutes**

**Attendance:**

Committee Members: Arthur Merrill (Director), Tina Molé (Director), Richard Parete (Director), Alicia Terry (Director), George Haynes, Jr. (Director), Allen Hinkley (Director), Thomas Hoyt (Director), Jason Merwin (CWC), Shilo Williams (NYCDEP)

Others: Zach Baldwin-Way (CWC), Lindsay Ballard (CWC), Aaron Bennett (NYCDEP), Donald Brown (CWC), Nick Carbone (Delaware County Watershed Affairs by Zoom), Joseph Cetta (Director), Samantha Costa (CWC), Timothy Cox (CWC), Heidi Emrich (Ulster County Environmental Planner), Kyle Faraci (CWC), Jessica Fiedler (CWC), Matthew Gianetta (NYCDEP), Mitchell Hull (CWC), John Jacobson (CWC), Innes Kasanof (Director), Lynn Kavanagh (CWC), John Kosier (Director), David Lane (CWC), Michael Maloney (NYSDOH), James Martin (CWC), Michael Meyers (NYCDEP), Ted Nitza (Ulster County Civil/Environmental Engineer by Zoom), Dymitry Ostapysyn (NYCDEP by Zoom), Pat Palmer (NYSDOH by Zoom), Barbara Puglisi (CWC), Nicholas Sadler (NYCDEP), John Schwartz (NYCDEP), Jeff Senterman (Director), Karen Stainbrook (NYSDEC by Zoom), Thomas Stalter (NYCDEP by Zoom), Morgan Tarbell (NYSDOH by Zoom), Gerson Tavarez (NYCDEP), Pauline Wanjugi (NYSDOH by Zoom), Cari Watkins-Bates (NYCDEP), Gemma Young (CWC)

- I. Arthur Merrill called the meeting to order at 10:36 AM.
- II. Minutes from the December 2025 Committee Meeting were reviewed and approved as written.
- III. Septic Program:

- A. **Linda Jones Over \$30,000.00:** Ms. Jones' residence is located at 383 Federal Hill Road 1, Delhi, New York 13753 in the Town of Delhi. CWC staff determined that her septic system is likely to fail. The engineer is Headwaters Engineering, PLLC. The contractor is A&M Excavating. Ms. Jones signed into the program on March 21, 2025. Her Design Application was received by NYCDEP on July 30, 2025, and deemed complete on August 12, 2025. Her septic system design was recommended for NYCDEP Design Approval on September 3, 2025. Ms. Jones' two-year deadline is March 21, 2027. Her proposed septic system will serve a three-bedroom house. Major components of this system include a 1,000-gallon septic tank, 220 linear feet of gravity pipe, one distribution box, 260 cubic yards of absorption fill material, 160 linear feet of Presby pipe, 19 cubic yards of C-33 sand, 129 linear feet of vent pipe, 90 linear feet of curtain drain, 25 linear feet of curtain drain outlet pipe, 30 linear feet of access road, remove four trees, a temporary culvert and site restoration. Three quotes were submitted to the homeowner for this project. They were \$42,552.00, \$42,929.00, and \$46,255.00. The lowest quote, submitted by A&M Excavating, is within 10% of the staff estimated cost of construction based on the Schedule of Values. The Committee recommended that a resolution be brought before the Board of Directors to reimburse Linda Jones in the amount not to exceed \$42,552.00 to build her septic system.

- B. Edison Lopez Over \$30,000.00:** Mr. Lopez's residence is located at 12293 Route 23A, Prattsville, New York 12468 in the Town of Lexington. CWC staff determined that his septic system is likely to fail. The engineer is Praetorius & Conrad, P.C. The contractor is GR Excavating, Inc. Mr. Lopez signed into the program on January 3, 2025. His Design Application was received by NYCDEP on June 27, 2025, and deemed complete on August 4, 2025. His septic system design was recommended for NYCDEP Design Approval on August 4, 2025. Mr. Lopez's two-year deadline is January 3, 2027. His proposed septic system will serve a two-bedroom house. Major components of this system include a 1,250-gallon septic tank, one pump chamber, 20 linear feet gravity pipe, 49 linear feet of force main, an effluent filter, one distribution box, 20 cubic yards of absorption fill material, 216 square feet of Eljen units, 16 cubic yards of C-33 sand, three risers, 40 linear feet of access road, decommission a second septic tank, spread and reclaim excess material and site restoration. The homeowner obtained three quotes. They were \$32,130.96, \$44,119.83, and \$46,989.30. Staff negotiated with the low-bidding contractor to obtain a quote within 10% of our estimated cost of construction based on the Schedule of Values. The Committee recommended that a resolution be brought before the Board of Directors to reimburse Edison Lopez in the amount not to exceed \$32,130.96 to build his septic system.
- C. Tawny Meres Over \$30,000.00:** Ms. Meres' residence is located at 6212 County Highway 26, Hamden, New York 13782 in the Town of Hamden. CWC staff determined that her septic system is failing. The engineer is Steele Brook Engineering PLLC. The contractor is Van Dusen Backhoe & Landscape Service. Ms. Meres signed into the program on September 6, 2024. Her Design Application was received by NYCDEP on January 22, 2025, and deemed complete on February 5, 2025. Her septic system design was recommended for NYCDEP Design Approval on February 14, 2025. Ms. Meres' two-year deadline is September 6, 2026. Her proposed septic system will serve a three-bedroom house. Major components of this system include a 1,000-gallon septic tank, one pump chamber, 125 linear feet of gravity pipe, 152 linear feet of force main, an effluent filter, 131 cubic yards of absorption fill material, 100 cubic yards of random fill material, three peat modules, 60 linear feet of swale, three risers, 60 linear feet of access road, remove eight trees and two stumps, 30 linear feet of six-inch sleeve and site restoration. Four quotes were submitted to the homeowner for this project. They were \$62,826.00, \$71,435.00, \$88,055.00, and \$102,505.56. The lowest quote, submitted by Van Dusen Backhoe & Landscape Service, is within 10% of the staff estimated cost of construction based on the Schedule of Values. The Committee recommended that a resolution be brought before the Board of Directors to reimburse Tawny Meres in the amount not to exceed \$62,826.00 to build her septic system.
- D. Douglas Strait Over \$30,000.00:** Mr. Strait's residence is located at 92 Alby Way, Prattsville, New York 12468 in the Town of Prattsville. CWC staff determined that his septic system is failing. The engineer is Doug Strait, P.E. The contractor is James E. Rion. Mr. Strait signed into the program on February 12, 2024. His Design Application was deemed complete on June 18, 2025. His septic system design was recommended for NYCDEP Design Approval on June 18,

2025. Mr. Strait's two-year deadline is February 12, 2026. His proposed septic system will serve a three-bedroom house. Major components of this system include a 1,000-gallon septic tank, a siphon chamber, 227 linear feet of gravity pipe, an effluent filter, one distribution box, 387 cubic yards of absorption fill material, 240 linear feet of absorption trench, 90 linear feet of curtain drain, 70 linear feet of curtain drain outlet pipe, three cleanouts, three risers, 180 linear feet of access road and site restoration. Three quotes were submitted to the homeowner for this project. They were \$43,230.00, \$61,816.62, and \$62,924.10. The lowest quote, submitted by James E. Rion, is below the staff estimated cost of construction based on the Schedule of Values. The Committee recommended that a resolution be brought before the Board of Directors to reimburse Douglas Strait in the amount not to exceed \$43,230.00 to build his septic system.

- E. Gregory Wetzel Over \$30,000.00:** Mr. Wetzel's residence is located at 511 Wolf Hollow Road, Andes, New York 13731 in the Town of Andes. CWC staff determined that his septic system is likely to fail. The engineer is John Bolger, P.E. The contractor is LaFever Excavating Inc. Mr. Wetzel signed into the program on June 24, 2024. His Design Application was received by NYCDEP on February 25, 2024, and deemed complete on March 14, 2025. His septic system design was recommended for NYCDEP Design Approval on June 16, 2025. Mr. Wetzel's two-year deadline is June 24, 2026. His proposed septic system will serve a two-bedroom house. Major components of this system include a 1,000-H2O gallon septic tank, one H2O pump chamber, 23 linear feet of gravity pipe, 26 linear feet of force main, 39 cubic yards of absorption fill material, 150 linear feet of Presby pipe, 30 cubic yards of C-33 sand, 34 linear feet of vent pipe, four cast iron risers, four additional riser sections, spread and reclaim material and site restoration. Three quotes were submitted to the homeowner for this project. They were \$42,165.00, \$45,442.00, and \$51,375.50. The lowest quote, submitted by LaFever Excavating Inc, is within 10% of the staff estimated cost of construction based on the Schedule of Values. The Committee recommended that a resolution be brought before the Board of Directors to reimburse Gregory Wetzel in the amount not to exceed \$42,165.00 to build his septic system.
- F. Tibet House US Inc. Over \$30,000.00:** The Tibet House US Inc. Menla Retreat & Dewa Spa is located at 48 Northwest Road, Phoenicia, New York 12464 in the Town of Shandaken. CWC staff determined that their septic system is failing. Tibet House US Inc. is a not-for-profit corporation with more than six full-time employees. They are eligible for 75 % reimbursement from the Expanded Septic Program. The engineer is Civil 1. The contractor is Chad Davis Contracting Inc. Frank Sergo, Executive Director, signed the property into the program on April 25, 2025. The Design Application was received by NYCDEP on May 20, 2025, and deemed complete on June 12, 2025. The septic system design was recommended for NYCDEP Design Approval on November 6, 2025. The two-year deadline is April 25, 2027. Their proposed septic system will serve a four-bedroom house. Major components of this system include a 1,250-gallon septic tank, 69 linear feet of gravity pipe, 308 cubic yards of absorption fill material, 150 linear feet of Presby pipe, 75 cubic yards of C-33 sand, 10 linear feet of vent pipe, 92 linear feet of silt fence, 160 linear feet of access road, 2,200 square feet of jute fabric, remove 15 trees, set the septic tank with a large excavator, decommission a second dry well and site restoration. Three quotes were

submitted to Tibet House US Inc. for this project. They were \$57,167.25, \$63,732.24, and \$78,258.26. The lowest quote, submitted by Chad Davis Contracting Inc., is within 10% of the staff estimated cost of construction based on the Schedule of Values.  $\$57,167.25 \times 75\% = \$42,875.44$ . The Committee recommended that a resolution be brought before the Board of Directors to reimburse Tibet House US Inc. in the amount not to exceed \$42,875.44 to build their septic system.

- G. Tara Buckley Additional Costs:** Ms. Buckley's residence is located at 7066 State Route 28, Shandaken, New York 12481 in the Town of Shandaken. The engineer is Christopher DiChiaro, P.E. The contractor is Eberhardt Excavation LLC. This project was previously approved for \$80,508.95. The contractor discovered at the beginning of construction that the access route quoted was not possible due to wet conditions that were not present during design. An access road had to be built from State Route 28 to deliver materials to the site. This required 35 less feet of access road. This amount was quoted back, but the contractor had to get a DOT access permit, hire flaggers, get an MPT sign package and rent a crash truck. The existing drainage ditch had to be changed to a deep curtain drain and swale. The contractor had quoted rerouting existing storm drainage on the west side of the house. When excavation began, it became apparent that it needed replacement. An additional 90 linear feet of culvert pipe and a catch basin were installed. A third grey water line and a cesspool were discovered. The line was connected to the new system. Several large boulders were encountered that were unsuitable for backfill. They were spread and reclaimed on site. Topsoil, seed and mulch had to be spread over a larger area. The contractor has requested \$45,509.16 for the added work. This amount appears to be reasonable and justified. The total project cost will be \$126,018.11. The Committee recommended that a resolution be brought before the Board of Directors to reimburse Tara Buckley in the amount not to exceed \$45,509.16 for additional costs to build her septic system.
- H. Ryan Holland Additional Costs:** Mr. Holland's residence is located at 289 McNaught Hill Road, Bovina, New York 13782 in the Town of Bovina. The engineer is John Bolger, P.E. The contractor is Tweedie Construction Services, Inc. This project was previously approved for \$1,684.20 to install a 1,250-gallon septic tank in 2010 for a former owner. \$31,479.60 was approved in April 2025 to replace the absorption field. The engineer directed the contractor to install 100 linear feet of curtain drain to prevent the pump chamber from being flooded. The contractor has requested \$2,018.00 for the added work. This is a secondary residence eligible for 60% reimbursement.  $\$2,018.00 \times 60\% = \$1,210.80$ . This amount appears to be reasonable and justified. The total project cost will be \$34,374.60. The Committee recommended that a resolution be brought before the Board of Directors to reimburse Ryan Holland in the amount not to exceed \$1,210.80 for additional costs to build his septic system.
- I. Nicholas Lewis Additional Costs:** Mr. Lewis' residence is located at 489 Takanasee Road, Fleischmanns, New York 12430 in the Town of Middletown. The engineer is Rex Sanford, P.E. The contractor is Josh Construction Inc. This project was previously approved for \$34,448.23. The septic tank delivery truck was unable to navigate the access road to set the tank behind the house. The

contractor had to use a large excavator to carry and set the tank. Large rocks and boulders had to be removed from trench areas to complete the system. The contractor brought 30 cubic yards of absorption fill material to backfill absorption trenches. The contractor has requested \$3,172.60 for the added work. This amount appears to be reasonable and justified. The total project cost will be \$37,620.83. The Committee recommended that a resolution be brought before the Board of Directors to reimburse Nicholas Lewis in the amount not to exceed \$3,172.83 for additional costs to build his septic system.

- J. **Ryan Rowlett Additional Costs:** Mr. Rowlett's residence is located at 2325 County Highway 8, Roxbury, New York 12474 in the Town of Roxbury. The engineer is John Bolger, P.E. The contractor is Jim Peters Excavating LLC. This project was previously approved for \$41,525.00. A large buried concrete slab was discovered when the contractor began excavation to install the Fuji aerobic unit. Five hours of hammering were required to attain necessary depth. The contractor has requested \$2,331.25 for the added work. This amount appears to be reasonable and justified. The total project cost will be \$43,856.25. The Committee recommended that a resolution be brought before the Board of Directors to reimburse Ryan Rowlett in the amount not to exceed \$2,331.25 for additional costs to build his septic system.
  
- K. **Laura White Additional Costs:** Ms. White's residence is located at 64 Porcupine Road, Gramhamsville, New York 12740 in the Town of Denning. The engineer is Steele Brook Engineering PLLC. The contractor is Mammoth Excavation, Inc. This project was previously approved for \$60,344.45. While preparing to install absorption fill material, the contractor discovered that the water supply line to the house went through the planned absorption field. The engineer submitted a new design to NYCDEP re-locating the absorption field further up the hill. The new design required a pump chamber, two-inch force main an additional riser, more tree removal and spread and reclaim excess material removed for the pump chamber. The contractor has requested \$14,786.15 for the added work. This amount appears to be reasonable and justified. The total project cost will be \$75,130.60. The Committee recommended that a resolution be brought before the Board of Directors to reimburse Laura White in the amount not to exceed \$14,786.15 for additional costs to build her septic system.
  
- L. **Deborah Capodiferro Second Time Repair:** Ms. Capodiferro's residence is in the Town of Windham, Section, Block and Lot number 61.00-3-16. This project was paid for in 2000 under the Reimbursement Program. A Second Time Repair was approved by the Septic Committee and Board of Directors for replacement of multiple components of the pump chamber. While pumping the septic tank to replace the pump, the pumper discovered that the tank was cracked. The septic tank will have to be replaced. The Committee recommended approving additional Second Time Repair costs to replace Deborah Capodiferro's septic tank.
  
- M. **12/31/25 Annual Reimbursement Eligibility:** Since 2005, an extension to the Annual Reimbursement Program has allowed property owners who had their septic systems repaired or replaced during the past year who were not eligible

otherwise to apply for reimbursement. Tim noted that this requires a Program Rule change which will be in the Board Book. The Committee recommended that a resolution be brought before the Board of Directors extending Annual Reimbursement Eligibility through December 31, 2025.

- N. **Joan and Robert Hunt Septic Maintenance Over \$1,000.00:** Mr. and Mrs. Hunt's residence is located at 724 County Highway 3, Margaretville, New York 12455 in the Town of Middletown. They have submitted receipts for the following costs: \$375.00 from T. Dolph Inc. to locate the septic tank. This required cutting the pipe to run a camera through the line. \$25.00 to repair the cut pipe was disallowed for a total of \$350.00. \$1,218.00 from LaFever Excavating, Inc. to uncover the tank with an excavator and install a six-inch riser with lid and five additional one-foot sections. \$450.00 from Neal Many for pumping the septic tank.  $\$350.00 + \$1,218.00 + 450.00 = \$2,018.00$ .  $\$2,018.00 \times 50\% = \$1,009.00$ . The Committee recommended that a resolution be brought before the Board of Directors to reimburse Joan and Robert Hunt in the amount not to exceed \$1,009.000 for maintenance costs.
  - O. **Septic Maintenance:** Mitch reported that pump out costs were reimbursed to 53 property owners last month. A total of 851 pump out costs have been reimbursed this year. 2025 was a record year for the program.
  - P. **Septic Cluster:** No report.
  - Q. **Septic Update:** Mitch Hull reported that 42 septic system repair costs were reimbursed to property owners last month. A total of 254 septic system repair costs were reimbursed this year.
- IV. The next Septic Committee Meeting was scheduled for February 3, 2026.
  - VI. The meeting adjourned at 10:53 AM.