

Catskill Watershed Corporation
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EMAIL COVER SHEET

To: PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMITTEE

ATTN: Jim Ellis Allen Hinkley
Innes Kasanof Thomas Snow
Tina Molé Shilo Williams
James Sofranko Joseph Cetta

CC: CWC Staff, John Schwartz, Michael Meyer, Matthew Giannetta, Thomas Stalter, Gerson Tavarez and Aaron Bennett

SUBJECT: Public Education Committee Meeting

DATE: Tuesday, October 6, 2026

TIME: Immediately Following Economic Development

LOCATION: Catskill Watershed Corporation Building & Via Zoom.

Additional Instructions:

Please be advised that the Public Ed. Committee meeting has been scheduled.
If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Jessica Fiedler.

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CWC Public Education Meeting
Tuesday, October 6, 2026
Agenda

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approve Minutes of September 2026
- III. Update on Round 29 grant award for Catskill Center for Conservation and Development
- IV. Other
- V. Next Education Committee meeting **TBD**
- VI. Adjournment

Public Education Committee

DRAFT MINUTES

September 1, 2026

Committee Members Present: Tina Molé, James Sofranko, Joseph Cetta, Innes Kasanof, Allen Hinkley, Shilo Williams, James Ellis.

The meeting was called to order at 10:52am.

1. James (Jim) Ellis moved that Tina Molé be elected Chair of the Public Education Committee and Joseph (Joe) Cetta seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor and Tina Molé was appointed Chair.
2. May 2026 minutes were approved as submitted.
3. Workforce Development grant application review: Gemma Young explained she was leaving CWC in November to move her family to New Zealand and that Workforce Development Program management had been moved into its functional home under the Grants & Operational Excellence Department led by Jessica Fiedler where the other competitive grant program, Public Education was managed. Gemma said Jessica would be the Workforce Development Program Manager and that Matthew Holbrook had been hired full time after completing a summer internship with CWC. Matthew's role is Program Specialist supporting the program administration of both programs under the Public Education III contract.

Jessica Fiedler then gave a brief presentation and overview of the WFD program for the Committee and welcomed new Committee member Jim Ellis to the fold. She explained the evaluation criteria used for evaluating the applications were based on the program rules. She also talked about the process the CWC team used to evaluate each application and talked briefly about the DEP internal review team process who provided their own comments and recommendations. Gemma showed a chart of the preapplication deadline inquiries – who reached out with questions and who may be interested in applying. Matthew Holbrook then shared a chart of the applications that were received which also showed recommended and not recommended applications. Matthew then went on to show the financial data for the five individual applications that were recommended by CWC for funding and referred the Committee to the two-page Executive Summaries that were created for each application for the next part of the discussion. While the executive summaries were being brought up on the screen, Gemma thanked the CWC Board and DEP for all their support to the Workforce Development program and their support generally.

The five applications put forth for recommendation:

- Delaware County Planning Parks and Water (DCPPWA): The 10-week internship program will provide practical skills in conservation engineering design, erosion control, stormwater

management, agricultural Best Management Practices (BMPs), stream assessments, water-quality monitoring, field data collection, and landowner engagement.

The motion to move this application to the Board of Directors was moved by Joe Cetta and seconded by Innes Kasanof.

- Prattsville Art Project: The program combines Google IT Support Professional Certificate coursework with weekly in-person instruction, open lab access, participant stipends, transportation assistance, career counseling, and job-placement support. Participants will gain skills in technical support, computer networking, operating systems, system administration, IT security, hardware troubleshooting, and interview preparation. The motion to move this application to the Board of Directors was moved by Innes Kasanof and seconded by Joe Cetta.
- Mountain Top Arboretum: The 16-week program will provide 128 hours of hands-on training in arboricultural Best Management Practices, tree risk assessment, pruning, equipment safety and maintenance, root-system protection, and forest-watershed interactions. The motion to move this application to the Board of Directors was moved by Jim Ellis and seconded by Innes Kasanof.
- Schoharie Economic Enterprise Corporation (SEEC): The program combines six months of training in digital marketing, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, e-commerce, customer relationship management, and data literacy with a six-week paid internship at a local watershed business. The motion to move this application to the Board of Directors was moved by Joe Cetta and seconded by Jim Ellis.
- Western Catskills Community Revitalization Council (WCCRC): The program includes a one-day intensive boot camp, a six-part workshop series, and a Youth Entrepreneurship Workbook for local high school students. Participants will develop skills in business planning, financial statements, product pricing, marketing, sales presentations, risk management, generative AI, resume development, and personal branding. Joe Cetta commented that it would be very beneficial for High Schools to go back to teaching financial literacy like they used to. The motion to move this application to the Board of Directors was moved by Jim Ellis and seconded by Shilo Williams.

Jessica Fiedler wrapped up by saying that Round 1 Program Participant Agreements were due to CWC on September 2, 2026, and that the money for Round1 grants would then be disbursed by the end of September 2026. Jessica said that the two Rounds for 2026 were over and that the 2027 round deadlines were the first Friday in February and the first Friday in June.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:22am.

Next meeting: TBC