Catskill Watershed Corporation
669 County Highway 38
Arkville, NY 12406

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EMAIL COVER SHEET

To: **PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

ATTN:
Jim Ellis
Innes Kasanof
Tina Molé
James Sofranko
Allen Hinkley
Karen Stainbrook
Shilo Williams
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, December 1, 2026
TIME: Immediately Following Finance
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, December 1, 2026
Agenda

I. Call to order

II. Approve Minutes of November 2026

III. Review updates to Workforce Development Program Rules

IV. Other

V. Next Education Committee Meeting **TBD**

VI. Adjournment

Public Education Committee

DRAFT MINUTES

November 3rd, 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 11:30 am.

1. The October 2026 minutes were approved as submitted.
2. Public Education Program Timeline change: Jessica Fiedler explained what the current timeline for Public Education looked like, its proposed revisions, and why the newly proposed timeline would make more sense for the program moving forward. Jessica talked about the benefits of moving to this new timeline which would allow organizations to submit applications from September 1 to the first Friday in November, instead of early November to the first Friday in February. Jess then explained how the timeline change could also bring in more higher-quality applications compared to the quality of application being received now.

   John Schwartz asked about the contract invoice cycle and stated some concerns around NYCDEP's fiscal year and potential interruptions that could occur. Jason Merwin answered that CWC already has funds on hand and has planned for something like this, and then stated that CWC and NYCDEP will work on this together for future rounds.

   Innes Kasanof asked if the program would be skipped for this year. Jessica answered that this round isn't necessarily being skipped, just delayed. Jessica also stated that the change will help teachers plan their applications in the future, the delay comes with good intent. Jessica then explained a specific example of how some applicants are unable to receive their funds in time for scheduled projects because of the current timeline. Renee Alexander reinforced this by saying the outreach and communications side of the program will be improved from previous years. Jessica then explained how with the current timeline, public audience projects and student-teacher projects are "competing" for funding, because of the timeline and how school's are off during summers, when public audience projects seem to be at their peak.

   Tina Molé agreed with the new timeline and the reasoning behind it. Innes Kasanof motioned this and James (Jim) Ellis seconded the motion.

3. Public Education Program Rules discussion: Jessica Fiedler discussed the current Public Education program rules and possible changes that will be brought to the committee next month. Jessica went in-depth on the changes such as: PEAG makeup and terms, removal of pre-schools from eligible applicants, changes for minimum and maximum grant funds, and contract term. Tina Molé approved the changes, the changes will be brought to the Public Education committee in the upcoming months.
4. TIC Emergency Funds discussion: Jessica Feidler discussed the 2014 board resolution for Trout in the Classroom (TIC) Emergency funds and explained what the original resolution was for. The

original resolution was created to keep $5,000 in emergency funding for the TIC program each year, it was never brought to the board after 2014 and was forgotten about over time. Jessica broke down the costs of this fund for the past 12 years and asked for $10,000 for the fund to cover over $8,000 used by the fund over the past 12 years. James Sofranko motioned this and Jim (James) Ellis seconded.

5. Updated CWC logo/30-year logo discussion: Renee Alexander discussed the idea of a new logo for CWC, she provided 4 different logos with 3 different styles for each. Renee explained why the new logo was being discussed, with the 30 year celebration of CWC coming up, and looking to convert CWC's current colors from basic to more earthy tones to fit in more with the "watershed life" feeling. Jason Merwin expressed his interest in the new logo and asked the board members how they felt about exploring new colors for the logo, while slightly touching up the look of the logo. Innes Kasanof said she liked the logo with more earthy tones, Allen Hinkley agreed with her. There was a consensus of moving forward with the earthy tone, and bringing some options to the next board meeting for moving forward.
6. Workforce Development applicant withdrawal: Jessica Feidler explained that one of the round 2 Workforce Development approved applications, Mountain Top Arboretum, is no longer able to move forward with their project. Jessica explained that MTA alerted CWC that they had lost their arborist and will look to apply in the future if they get another one.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:54am.

Next meeting: TBC

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM RULES (ARTICLE 4)

Catskill Watershed Corporation
669 County Highway 38
Arkville, NY 12406

(845) 586-1400

Approved by the Board of Directors

October 7, 2025

Equal Opportunity Employer

CWC **Workforce Development Program Rules**
Article 4

CWC recognizes the importance of the Watershed to the City and the critical role of the Watershed communities in stewarding the Watershed, the importance of diversity and aquatic life in the Watershed and the importance of maintaining and preserving water quality in the Watershed. The CWC recognizes that increased awareness of the historical and present importance of the Watershed and the City's water supply through public education programs will assist in meeting these goals.

CWC **Workforce Development Program Rules**
Article 4

Chapter 4:01 Workforce Development Program

4:01:01 Definitions

Words used in this article mean:

1) "CWC": the Catskill Watershed Corporation;
2) “WFD Program”: the Workforce Development Program.
3) “WOH” or “WOH Watershed”: the New York City West of Hudson Watershed.
4) "Board" or “CWC Board”: the Board of Directors of the CWC;
5) "DEP": the New York City Department of Environmental Protection;
6) “Applicant”: an organization or entity that submits a proposal for funding to CWC for the proposed implementation of a workforce development project;
7) “MOA”: the New York City Watershed Memorandum of Agreement.
8) “Agreement”: the Public Education III Agreement between the New York City Department of Environmental Protection and the Catskill Watershed Corporation dated 8/27/2025.
9) “Eligible Project”: a Workforce Development Project that meets the eligibility requirements.
10) “Program Funds”: any New York City funds and any earnings thereon remitted to CWC hereunder for the purposes of carrying out the WFD Program in accordance with the terms of the Agreement.
11) “Program Participant”: an eligible Applicant whose Eligible Project has been approved and has entered into a Program Participation Agreement with CWC in accordance with the terms and provisions of these Program Rules and the Agreement.
12) “Program Participant Agreement”: a written agreement between CWC and the Program Participant governing the terms and procedures for awarding a grant to fund the Eligible Project.
13) “Program Rules”: the written program rules governing the WFD Program, developed and modified by CWC in consultation with DEP.
14) “Project Contract”: a contract entered into between a Program Participant and a Project Contractor for implementation of an Eligible Project in accordance with the terms and provisions of these Program Rules and the Agreement.
15) “Project Contractor”: a contractor who has entered into an agreement with the Program Participant and performed work on an approved Eligible Project in accordance with the terms and provisions of these Program Rules and the Agreement.
16) “Unallocated”: the amount of Program Funds provided to CWC that have not been allocated by CWC to an Eligible Project as of the date of the Reconciliation Statement (as defined in the Agreement).
17) “Workforce Development Project”: a project that is intended to provide individuals with the knowledge, skills, training, certifications, professional licenses, and technical expertise to pursue and obtain a wide range of jobs in the WOH Watershed.
18) “Competitive Grant Program”: the structure of WFD Program funding whereby multiple Applicants apply for a limited pool of money and selections are made based on the eligibility and comparative strength and merit of their written applications.

19) "Scholarship": a financial award made to, or on behalf of, a specific individual who is named or identified at the time of application or award, to support that individual's enrollment in or completion of an educational or training program. Scholarships are ineligible for funding under this Program.

20) "Stipend": Not a Scholarship but a fixed amount of Program Funds awarded to a Program Participant as part of an approved Eligible Project. The Program Participant then disburses the amount to individuals selected to take part in the Eligible Project's activities, such as training, internships, apprenticeships, or mentorships. Stipend recipients are not identified at the time of application. The Program Participant selects them after the award of the grant, using the selection criteria described in the approved application and Program Participant Agreement. A stipend is intended to offset an individual's costs of participation or time commitment and is not considered compensation for employment unless otherwise specified in the Program Participant Agreement.

21) "Tuition": the fees charged by an educational institution, training provider, or certification program for longer-term schooling or continuing education that leads to a collegiate degree. Tuition is ineligible for funding under this program.

22) "Machinery/Equipment/Technology": durable property, devices, systems, software, or tools purchased or acquired for use in implementing an approved project. Examples include machinery, vehicles, tools, computer hardware, software, monitoring equipment, communications equipment, laboratory equipment, environmental monitoring devices, and other specialized assets needed to carry out project activities.

4:01:02 Purpose and Scope

The CWC Workforce Development Program is designed to enhance the workforce capacity within the WOH Watershed region by providing grant funding to equip individuals with the knowledge, skills, training, certifications, professional licenses, and technical expertise to pursue and obtain a wide range of jobs and careers in and in support of the WOH Watershed.

By fostering a well-trained and adaptable workforce, the program aims to support the economic vitality of the region, ensuring that businesses and industries can thrive while maintaining a commitment to environmental stewardship.

4:01:03 Program Objectives

The CWC encourages applications that seek to meet the following outcomes and address the specific challenges of workforce development in the WOH Watershed, such as:

- Training and skill development in sectors with identified current and future job opportunities within the WOH Watershed economy;

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- Educating and training local residents to perform important jobs related to Watershed protection, including partnership programs;
- Facilitating practical, hands-on experience through paid apprenticeships or internships;
- Funding training programs to bridge skill gaps and promote career advancement;
- Initiatives that provide enabling services, such as childcare, transportation, housing assistance, and financial counseling, to help individuals overcome barriers to development and employment;
- Access to broadband and technology to enable digital literacy and skills training;
- Training and employment-related opportunities for individuals with disabilities;
- Hard- and soft-skill training to help individuals who are neither in school nor working to reconnect with career opportunities; and
- Providing skills and pathways to prepare youth (ages 13-30) for long-term success ~~and the future of work in an AI/automation-driven WOH Watershed economy.~~

4:01:04 Competitive Grant Program

The Board shall evaluate written project applications for participation in the WFD Program, and in the Board's sole discretion, select projects to fund based on consideration of the eligibility criteria and priorities set forth below.

There shall be two application cycles for competitive grants each program year. Applications must be received by 3 p.m. the first Friday of February (Cycle 1) and received by 3 p.m. the first Friday of June (Cycle 2) and are open to all eligible activities and audiences as listed in section 4:01:07.

The CWC staff, in consultation with DEP, shall provide copies of recommended written grant applications to the Public Education Committee at least ten days before the Committee reviews the projects to recommend to the Board for approval. CWC staff shall also provide any written evaluation comments received from DEP.

The Board shall select for funding only those projects it has evaluated and determined to be Eligible Workforce Development Projects pursuant to section 4:01:07 and the criteria listed in section 4:01:08. Once approved and the 15-day period pursuant to MOA Paragraph 107 has passed without objection, CWC shall enter written Program Participation Agreements with approved Applicants to implement selected workforce development projects and programs.

4:01:05 Distribution of Unallocated Funds

Program Funds that have not been allocated by CWC to an Eligible Project at the close of the application/award cycle 1 shall be carried forward to the next application/award cycle (cycle 2) of the current program year.

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Unallocated funds remaining at the close of the program year shall be carried forward and be available for award during the next program year.

4:01:06 Size and Type of Awards

The Competitive Grant Program will be open to qualified institutions as delineated in 4:01:07. The minimum award shall be ~~No Program Participant Agreement shall be for~~ no less than $5,000.00~~500.00~~. The Board may award less or more than ~~less than~~ the amount requested in the application. In determining award amounts for each Applicant, the Board shall consider the availability of funds, the proposed project, an Applicant's ability to carry out the proposed activity within 12 months of an executed Program Participant Agreement, including the ability to obtain matching funds (if applicable).

4:01:07 Eligible Applicants

To be eligible for funding awards under this program all Applicants must meet one of the following criteria or partner with a qualified institution:

1. Public, private or charter schools (grades K-12), a college or university, Board of Cooperative Education Services, a vocational or trade schools.

2. Not-for-profit corporations.

3. Public entities including municipalities, towns, villages, hamlets, counties, special-purpose districts (e.g., libraries, water, soil and water, or sewer districts) and other subdivisions of state or local government.

4. Private incorporated employers.

4:01:08 Eligibility Criteria for Funding

Applicants' project goals must clearly articulate how the proposed project will provide WOH residents or employers with the knowledge, skills, training, certifications, professional licenses, and technical expertise to pursue and obtain a wide range of jobs and careers in the WOH Watershed.

A. Workforce Development Projects may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- apprenticeships, internships, mentorships;
- career development projects or events;
- collaborations with existing workforce development entities, program or initiatives;
- short-term professional development activities, including trainings, seminars, workshops, and courses required to obtain or maintain a professional license,

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certification, or other non-degree credential. Eligible costs may include registration, preparation materials, coursework, and exam/test fees, Stipends. ~~professional development trainings, seminars, courses required for licenses or accreditations, or workshops;~~ or

- the purchase of supplies, technology or small equipment/machinery costing less than $50,000 in total Program Funds provided that such purchases are directly related to a workforce development or career development project, program or initiative.

B. Projects ineligible for funding include:

- Scholarships, as defined in the "Definitions" section, ~~scholarships, tuition, or other financial assistance for enrollment in a degree-granting program scholarships (not including eligible trainings, seminars, courses, workshops),~~
- Tuition, as defined in the "Definitions" section, ~~tuition or related costs for longer-term schooling or continuing education that leads to a bachelors/graduates degree. tuition costs for longer-term schooling or continuing education that leads to a degree,~~
- the purchase of equipment and/or machinery costing more than $50,000 in total Program Funds,
- the purchase of a single piece of equipment or machinery that represents 80% or more of total project funds (requested + match funds), or
- the purchase of real property, or
- the construction or installation of permanent buildings or structures.

4:01:09 Evaluation Criteria for Funding

Program and project design should ensure that resources are used efficiently and that the program or project is repeatable over the short or long term. In determining whether to select a project for funding, the CWC Board must address these criteria:

A. The CWC may only enter into Program Participant Agreement to expend workforce development program funds with Eligible Applicants as defined in section 4:01:07.

B. The proposed workforce development project must meet the eligibility criteria as defined in section 4:01:08.

C. Proposed programs must comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations and adhere to all applicable non-discrimination laws and ensure equal access to services for all eligible individuals.

When making a decision on an application, the Board may, in addition, examine the following factors :

(a) Audience and number of individuals reached;
(b) Amount of grant requested;

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(c) Specific workforce development needs within target communities (supported by data or community assessments);
(d) Anticipated accomplishment of program goals and effect on target audience, community, area, and WOH Watershed;
(e) The amount of the Applicant's contribution to the project.
(f) Applicant's record of compliance in this and other CWC programs.
(g) Applicant's track record and prior ability to perform similar or related work.

4:01:10 Program Restrictions

Grant funds from the Program may be used in the WOH Watershed region with the following restrictions:

1) All advertising, including print and electronic, and work products shall include a logo or tag line identifying it as paid for with CWC Workforce Development Grant.

2) Workforce Development Funds shall not be used to pay for capital costs of constructing stationary facilities or acquiring any interests in real property.

3) Workforce Development Funds may only be used to pay costs pursuant to written agreements, reasonable and necessary fees and expenses of any consultants engaged by CWC to assist in fulfilling its duties and responsibilities and CWC's reasonable administrative costs to manage the WDP.

4~~6~~.) CWC shall also not use Workforce Development Funds to pay any costs that have been or will be paid for with funds provided under any other City-funded program**.**

5.) Mileage Costs. Mileage may be reimbursed at a rate not to exceed the IRS standard mileage rate in effect on the date of travel. Applicants seeking mileage reimbursement must provide an estimated mileage budget in their application. An additional contingency of up to ten percent (10%) of the mileage budget may be requested. Reimbursement shall not exceed the approved mileage budget, including any approved contingency amount, and any excess mileage costs shall be the responsibility of the Program Participant.

4:01:11 Application Requirements for Competitive Funding

Each Applicant shall submit a complete application, budget and supporting documentation to be reviewed by CWC no later than the due date.

CWC and DEP staff shall internally review and then put forward recommended applications and supporting documentation, including budget, to the Public Education Committee for review. If recommended by the Public Education Committee, CWC staff shall submit applications to the CWC Board for their review and action.

Application forms shall be provided by the CWC and must be completed and signed before an application is presented to the Public Education Committee.

The following information is required for all grant applications:
1.) Applicant's name and address;
2.) Descriptions of entity applying for grant (i.e. type of organization);
3.) Contact people, address, and telephone number;
4.) A narrative project plan which contains information regarding the Applicant's proposal and a detailed plan for how they will evaluate the effectiveness of their program in achieving its goals (specific metrics and data collection methods);
5.) Tax identification number;
6.) Name of project partner (if applicable);
7.) Total amount of funding requested with a detailed budget outlining how grant funds will be used and a clear justification for each expense;
8.) Documentation of non-profit status (if applicable);
9.) Letters of commitment from all collaborating agencies and/or matching funding sources (if applicable);
10.) Municipalities shall provide an authorizing resolution in support of the grant application;
11.) Approximate start-up date, and the date by which the proposed project will be complete; and
12.) Any other additional information as may be requested by CWC and/or Board in order to assist in grant award process;

4:01:12 Board Action On Applications

For each application put forward to them, the Board shall either approve the application as submitted, approve as recommended, approve the application with modification, table for more information, or disapprove the application.

An Applicant who believes that their application under the WFD Program was wrongly denied may request a review of the disputed application(s) by the CWC Board of Directors. The Applicant shall submit such request for appeal in writing to the President of the CWC, by certified mail, return receipt requested, within 30 days of the Applicant's receipt of denial letter. In the request for appeal, the Applicant shall identify the reason for the appeal. The CWC Board shall act upon written request no later than the next regularly scheduled CWC Board meeting that occurs at least fifteen (15) days after CWC's receipt of the completed written request for appeal.

The decision of the CWC Board of Directors after appeal is not subject to further review or revision by CWC.

4:01:13 Grantee Reporting Requirements

Each entity that is awarded a WFD Program grant is required to file a report with the CWC describing the manner in which the funds were expended, in accordance with the requirements of the Reconciliation Statement (as defined by the Agreement), at the completion of the project or within 14 ~~12~~ months of the grant, whichever milestone occurs first.

The report shall be in a form prescribed by the CWC staff. The report must contain any applicable information relative to the measured success of the program.

Failure to submit a completed Final Report prior to the termination of the Program Participation Agreement (14 months after execution)~~30 days prior to the grant Program Participant Agreement's termination date~~ may render the Applicant ineligible to apply for further CWC funding and/or may result in a demand for return of grant funds ~~in cases of misuse, failure to meet agreed-upon goals, or non-compliance with program rules~~.

4:01:14 Method of Payment

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Approved Applicants shall submit payment requests only on forms provided by CWC staff.

4:01:15 Administrative Functions

The CWC staff shall process grant applications, coordinate with DEP on the evaluation of each project, forward recommended grant applications to the CWC Public Education Committee and Board, prepare and negotiate agreements, and engage in any other functions necessary to expedite and assist the Board in the performance of its duties.

Notwithstanding any assurance, guarantee, communication, or representation made to the contrary, there is no commitment of the CWC without specific authorization by the Board. Only the Board may make an award from the Workforce Development Funds to an Applicant.

4:01:16 Grant Requirements

All successful Applicants must execute a CWC Workforce Development Program Participant Agreement prior to receipt of Workforce Development funds. Applicants who have been awarded funds must submit a resolution(s) by any appropriate body (e.g., boards of directors of non-profit organizations) demonstrating authority of the individual executing the Program Participant Agreement to contract on behalf of the organization/entity, and authorization to participate and perform the activities specified in the approved grant application, prior to receipt of Workforce Development Program funds.

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CWC must receive an executed Program Participant Agreement no later than 90 days after the date the application was approved by the CWC Board. If the Program Participant Agreement is not received by such date, grant approval will be deemed withdrawn. The Applicant may reapply for funding in the next round.

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