UNRBA Board of Directors: November 18, 2026, Board Minutes

The Board of Directors of the Upper Neuse River Basin Association (UNRBA) met at 9:30 A.M. on Wednesday, November 18, 2026, via an in-person and conference call/webinar. Meeting attendees are listed below.

Name	Affiliation
Wendy Jacobs (Chair)*	Durham County
Ryan Eaves (Treasurer)	Durham County
Russ May (Secretary)	Granville County
Forrest Westall (Executive Director)	UNRBA
Georgana Kicinski	City of Creedmoor
Aarin Miles	City of Durham
Carl Rist	City of Durham
David Harris	Durham County Soil & Water
Wesley Poole	Orange County
Marilyn Carter	Orange County
Sherry Wilborn	Person County
Scott Schroyer	SGWASA
Vicky Daniels	Town of Butner
Jennifer Ganser	Town of Butner
Meaghun Darab	Town of Hillsborough
Heather Fisher	Town of Hillsborough
Jim Wrenn	Upper Jurisdictions
Alix Matos	Brown & Caldwell
John Huisman	DWR
Reggie Hicks*	City of Durham
Kieu Tran*	City of Durham
Sandi Wilbur*	City of Durham
Michelle Woolfolk*	City of Durham
Ed Buchan*	City of Raleigh
Carolyn Bachl*	City of Raleigh
Kathy Cooper*	City of Raleigh
Christopher Sandt*	Orange County
Nish Trivedi*	Person County
Tim Karan*	Town of Stem
Nick Nolte*	Town of Wake Forest
Katie Cromwell*	Upper Jurisdictions
Nancy Daly*	Wake County
Carleen Evans*	Jones and Company

*Attended meeting virtually

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Welcome and Recognition

As Wendy Jacobs was not available to Chair the meeting in person, the Secretary, Russ May, called the meeting to order and welcomed all those participating. Russ asked if any of the Board Directors have any "conflict of interest" issues with any agenda items, and no conflicts were identified. Russ called the roll, and 13 of 14 members were present for a quorum. Forrest Westall reviewed the voting hierarchy described in the UNRBA Bylaws. Russ asked if there were any amendments to the agenda. Being none, Meaghun Darab made the motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Marilyn Carter, and approved by the Board.

Action Items of the Board

Approval of Minutes, September 16, 2026, Board Meeting – Russ asked the Board if there were any edits or corrections to the draft minutes provided. Hearing none, Georgana Kicinski made the motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Sherry Wilborn, and approved by the Board.

Treasurer's Report – Ryan Eaves presented the Treasurer's Report for the period ending October 31, 2026. The checking account balance at the close of the statement was $103,494.80, and the savings account balance was $1,453,979.32 (a copy of the Treasurer's Report is posted on the UNRBA website). Forrest summarized the amount remaining in the legal fund and noted that the legal contracts would likely need to be amended in January 2027 to provide funds for continued work. Following review of the report, Meaghun Darab made the motion to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented, seconded by Georgana Kicinski, and approved by the Board.

Preliminary Report from the Personnel Committee & Consideration of the FY2028 Budget – Wendy provided a status of the work of the Personnel Committee which met on October 26, 2026. The committee provided positive feedback on the Executive Director services team and the need for continuity in FY2028 to further the efforts to readopt the rules. For planning purposes, the committee suggests using the FY2027 member dues. The committee will meet again in December and bring a revised budget estimate to the Board at their January 20, 2027, meeting. The Board approves the budget during their March meeting.

Appoint the Nominating Committee – Forrest reviewed the objectives of the Committee and noted the members appointed last year (Carl Rist, Terry Hackett, Ed Buchan, and Georgana Kicinski). This Committee is responsible for identifying candidates to fill the Officer positions of the Board for consideration at the annual meeting (January 20, 2027). Russ asked if any additional Board members would like to serve on the Nominating Committee. Hearing none, Russ asked for a motion to appoint the Nominating Committee. Vicky Daniels made the motion, seconded by Marilyn Carter, and approved by the Board.

Approve the 2027 Meeting Dates – Forrest reviewed the recommended meeting dates for 2027 for the Board and the Path Forward Committee (PFC). These dates were distributed to the Board along with the other meeting materials and posted to the UNRBA website. Following discussion, Russ asked for a motion to approve the 2027 meeting dates. Carl Rist made the motion, seconded by Sherry Wilborn, and approved by the Board. Following the vote, the Board discussed that some meetings may be held virtually and that the Executive Director would confer with the Executive Committee before the meetings to determine if a virtual meeting would be appropriate. Forrest explained that the January meeting is the "annual meeting" in the Bylaws when Officers are elected, and he recommended that the January meeting be in person.

Motion to Recess the Board to Sit as the Compliance Group Committee – The Stage I Existing Development Interim Alternative Implementation Approach (IAIA) is managed by the Compliance Group Committee (CGC) of the UNRBA. Forrest explained that the next action items were under the purview of the CGC, and so the Board needed to recess and site as the CGC. Following discussion, Russ asked for a motion to recess the Board to sit as the CGC. Meaghun Darab made the motion, seconded by Carl Rist, and approved by the Board.

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Action Items of the CGC

Approve the UNRBA IAIA FY2025-2026 Annual Summary Report, Approve the Submittal Letter, and Authorize the Chair to Sign **–** Forrest reviewed the annual report for the fifth year of the IAIA and noted that the program has been extended another five years or until the rules are readopted. While the UNRBA members were required to invest ~$1.5 million in FY2025-2026, the members invested ~$3 million. Over the five-year period, the members invested ~$19.2 million, which is $11.6 million more than required. Forrest noted the success of the program and that the UNRBA was working with the North Carolina Division of Water Resources (DWR) to include this investment-based compliance approach in the revised Falls Lake Rules. Russ asked the Board if there were any edits or corrections to the annual report or draft letter provided. Hearing none, Marilyn Carter made the motion to approve the UNRBA IAIA FY2025-2026 annual summary report, approve the submittal letter, and authorize the Chair to sign; seconded by Sherry Wilborn; and approved by the Board.

Motion to Recess the CGC to Resume the Regular Session of the Board – Following the action items of the CGC, Russ asked for a motion to recess the CGC to resume the regular session of the Board. Carl Rist made the motion, seconded by Meaghun Darab, and approved by the Board.

Informational Items

Status of the Falls Lake Rules Readoption Process – Forrest reviewed the work of the UNRBA to support the Falls Rules Readoption Process and the benefits of those efforts relative to the latest draft rules distributed by the DWR in October 2026. He summarized the critical outstanding issues on the New Development, Existing Managed Lands, Wastewater, and Purpose and Scope rules. He specifically noted the concerns with DWR's draft for the process to evaluate and set a site-specific standard for chlorophyll-a in the lake. He emphasized the need for a process that moved forward quickly and that relied strongly on the work of the UNRBA and the Collaboratory. Forrest indicated that the UNRBA support team, key leaders of the UNRBA, and staff from DWR will continue to meet to try to make progress on the rules. He noted that Falls Lake is meeting all of its designated uses: water supply, ecological viability, and recreational. Based on modeling and a careful evaluation of extremely limited impact to the lake's chlorophyll-a levels related to the wastewater plant discharges, it is not necessary to establish what is essentially a moratorium on providing utility service by limiting the use of the capacity at the wastewater treatment facilities. He noted that it should remain an objective to continue to manage nutrients and maintain and improve water quality in the reservoir. The membership of the UNRBA has continued to support these objectives and provided ongoing efforts to help develop appropriate rules for readoption. Forrest recommended that work continue to resolve these issues and address the wastewater treatment rule. Carl asked about the soil improvement practice, and Forrest explained that for existing development the practice is available for nutrient crediting, but for new development the practice will not be available until the Stormwater Nitrogen and Phosphorus (SNAP) tool has been updated (likely 2028). David Harris asked if DWR is accounting for additives like biochar in the revised tool. John Huisman (DWR) indicated that he would discuss with DWR staff and report back.

Continued Rule Development for Jordan Lake and High Rock Lake Watersheds – Forrest reminded the Board of DWR's ongoing work to develop a nutrient management strategy for High Rock Lake and to update and readopt the Jordan Lake Rules. He noted that the UNRBA team is continuing to monitor these processes. John stated that the Falls Rules would likely be adopted first, followed by Jordan Lake, and then High Rock Lake.

Communication Support – Forrest provided online links of previously developed handouts that explain the challenges associated with the current Falls Rules and the work performed by the UNRBA and others to find more reasonable solutions.

Other Items – Forrest noted that the NC State study on streambank erosion has been completed, and the data will be posted soon for the local governments to use in their watershed plans. He also mentioned other items the UNRBA is tracking including the impacts of PFAS/PFOS on treatment costs and local governments.

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Forrest noted that following the November election, appointments to the North Carolina Environmental Management Commission may change in the new year.

The next scheduled Board meeting will be held January 20, 2027, at 9:30 A.M. at the Butner Town Hall with an option for remote access.

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

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