

UNRBA Board of Directors: January 15, 2025, Board Minutes

The Board of Directors of the Upper Neuse River Basin Association (UNRBA) met at 9:30 A.M. on Wednesday, January 15, 2025, via an in-person and conference call/webinar. Meeting attendees are listed below.

Name	Affiliation
Wendy Jacobs (Chair)	Durham County
Jane Harrison (Vice Chair)	City of Raleigh
Ryan Eaves (Treasurer)	Durham County
Russ May (Secretary)	Granville County
Forrest Westall (Executive Director)	UNRBA
Georgana Kicinski	City of Creedmoor
Reggie Hicks	City of Durham
Carl Rist	City of Durham
Michelle Woolfolk	City of Durham
Ed Buchan	City of Raleigh
David Harris	Durham County Soil & Water
Wesley Poole	Orange County
Christopher Sandt	Orange County
Marilyn Carter	Orange County
Sherry Wilborn	Person County
Scott Schroyer	SGWASA
Vicky Daniels	Town of Butner
Meaghun Darab	Town of Hillsborough
Terry Hackett	Town of Hillsborough
Katie Cromwell	Upper Jurisdictions
Jennifer Tavantzis	Upper Jurisdictions
Jim Wrenn	Upper Jurisdictions
Alix Matos	Brown & Caldwell
Dan McLawhorn	DFM Law Office
John Huisman	DWR
Grady O'Brien	NC Conservation Network
Kathy Cooper*	City of Raleigh
Barry Baker*	Granville County
Katherine Cathey*	Person County
Jennifer Ganser*	Town of Butner
Nick Nolte*	Town of Wake Forest
Robert Hornik*	Upper Jurisdictions
Haywood Phthisic *	UNRBA
Donna Myers*	American Rivers
Jay Sauber*	Sauber Water Quality Consultant
Carleen Evans*	Winston, Williams, Creech, Evans, and Co., LLP

*Attending meeting virtually

Welcome and Recognition -

The Chair, Wendy Jacobs, called the meeting to order and welcomed all those in attendance and those participating through remote access. Wendy asked if any of the Board Directors have any “conflict of interest” issues with any agenda items, and no conflicts were identified. The Chair called the roll and 11 of 14 members were present for a quorum. The Chair asked if there were any amendments to the agenda. Being none, Jane Harrison made the motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Carl Rist, and approved by the Board.

Action Items -

Approval of Minutes, November 20, 2024, Board Meeting – The Chair asked the Board if there were any edits or corrections to the draft minutes provided. Carl Rist identified a typo. Russ May made the motion to approve the minutes with the correction noted, seconded by Georgana Kicinski, and approved by the Board.

Treasurer’s Report – Ryan Eaves presented the Treasurer Report for the period ending January 6, 2025. The checking account balance at the close of the statement was \$282,913.83 and the savings account balance was \$1,510,340.99. Following review of the report, Georgana Kicinski made the motion to approve the Treasurer’s Report as presented, seconded by Jane Harrison, and approved by the Board.

Appointment of Board Officers– The UNRBA Bylaws call for its Annual Meeting to be held in January and provides for the election of Association Officers for the calendar year. The Board appointed a Nominating Committee during the September 18, 2024, Board Meeting to make recommendations at the January Meeting. Carl Rist provided the Committee’s report and recommendation to re-appoint the 2024 Board Officers as listed on page one of these minutes. Following discussion, Meaghun Darab made the motion to re-appoint the Officers as nominated, Sherry Wilborn seconded, and the Board approved.

Approval of Recommendations from the Personnel Committee – The Personnel Committee was appointed by the Board at their September 18, 2024, meeting. The Personnel Committee met December 4, 2024, and reviewed the work of the UNRBA during 2024 and the support provided under the Executive Director Services Contract. Wendy Jacobs provided the Committee’s report and recommendations. Following discussion, Georgana Kicinski made the motion to approve the recommendations of the Personnel Committee, Carl Rist seconded, and the Board approved.

Approval of the Financial Services Letters of Engagement – The Executive Director presented two letters of engagement with Winston, Williams, Creech, Evans & Co., LLP to provide 1) financial services and bookkeeping and 2) preparation of the Association’s 990 tax form for the year ending June 30, 2025. As discussed with Winston, Williams, Creech, Evans & Co., these letters cover the period April 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026. The Board discussed that the UNRBA will need to identify a separate audit firm well before the next 3-year audit is conducted in 2027. The Board also discussed that the invoice payment process will need to change such that invoices are sent to the Executive Director and the Treasurer. The Board also discussed that UNRBA member past-year water withdrawal rates from the watershed and land areas in the watershed are due to the Executive Director this month to allow for estimation of annual dues for FY2026. Following discussion, Georgana Kicinski made the motion to approve the letters of engagement, Meaghun Darab seconded, and the Board approved.

Informational Items -

Background for New Board Members – Forrest provided an overview of history of the UNRBA ed with a focus on the UNRBA’s role in the readoption of the Falls Lake Rules. Additional information was attached to the January 15, 2025, Board meeting [agenda](#) and is available at <https://unrba.org/>.

Status of the Falls Lake Rules Readoption Process – Forrest noted that the Falls Lake Rules Readoption process has been triggered by the documents the UNRBA submitted in November 2023 and the report provided by the NC Collaboratory in December 2023. The formal adoption process will be led by the Division of Water Resources (DRW). To support the effort, the UNRBA has organized four workgroups to discuss concepts for drafting revised rules. DWR is participating in all four workgroups. The UNRBA and DWR jointly presented the status of the process to the Environmental Management Commission on January 9, 2025. Rule readoption is currently anticipated in early 2027. Forrest noted that every effort will be made to coordinate and collaborate with DEQ, DWR, EMC, and stakeholders to get appropriate revisions to the rules in place using the UNRBA's recommendations. Efforts will continue to speed up this process in any reasonable way possible.

Continued Rule Development for Jordan Lake and High Rock Lake Watersheds – Forrest pointed out that the agenda and presentation materials provide information on the potential impacts of DWR's draft proposal for changes to new development requirements (post-construction stormwater controls) for the High Rock Lake Watershed and the rules readoption process for the Jordan Lake Watershed. He noted that the UNRBA team is concerned that these processes will impact the Falls Lake rules readoption process, both in timing and in "setting" an approach for nutrient management that could be inconsistent with the recommendations of the UNRBA. This concern has been communicated to DWR via email and through meetings and discussions with Division staff.

Modeling and Regulatory Support and Chlorophyll-a Update – Alix Matos reported the WARMF watershed model, draft WARMF Lake model, and draft EFDC lake model reports have been submitted to DWR. She noted that Forrest has requested a formal statement from the Division that the watershed model has been reviewed and met quality assurance requirements of the Division as required in the Falls Lake Rule allowing a reexamination. DWR doesn't have specific quality assurance requirements but previously approved the UNRBA's Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) for the modeling effort prior to the effort proceeding. DWR has issued an email concurring with the watershed and lake model development effort. A formal letter from DWR will be submitted following formal appointment of the new Secretary. Dr Marty Lebo will continue his work a specific Falls Lake 303(d) assessment methodology and site-specific chlorophyll-a criteria.

FY2026 Budget Discussion – Forrest noted that the UNRBA has moved into a period of supporting the use of the UNRBA's Concepts and Principles document and Consensus Principles II in the development of revised Falls Lake Rules. It will be essential for the UNRBA to have sufficient resources to support the ongoing activities of the UNRBA. While we do not anticipate that there will be a heavy demand for extensive modeling support, there has to be a "team" available to effectively support the UNRBA's engagement on the readoption process and to address any technical questions. Modeling support on any additional requests from DWR or stakeholders will need to be evaluated. It is impossible to predict the requested support the Executive Director will need to keep the engagement, coordination, and collaboration of the UNRBA in the rule development/readoption process. It was stated that the budget recommendation for FY 2026 will include contingency provisions to meet these demands. Forrest emphasized that it will be the Board's decision to determine if the requested contingency is properly described and supported. Board members discussed the various methods local governments use to fund participation in the UNRBA.

UNRBA Board members have requested a budget amount to consider during the local government annual budgeting process. During the November 20, 2024, meeting, the Board discussed a planning-level budget of \$899,500. At their November meeting, the PFC requested additional information about the budget and discussed capping the legal support fund based on pending information from the legal group. The PFC plans to finalize their recommendation for the FY2026 budget at the March meeting and will bring a recommendation to the Board at the March 19th meeting. While it is extremely difficult to predict the future, a 5-year budgeting plan is under development and will be presented to the PFC ahead of the Board's March meeting.

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Previously Approved Board Meeting Dates for 2025 – Forrest reviewed the Board and PFC meeting dates approved by the Board at the September 18, 2024, meeting.

Communication Support – In addition to the activities discussed earlier in the meeting, Forrest reviewed upcoming activities including establishment of a Falls Lake list serve by DWR, coordination with DWR on a larger stakeholder engagement kickoff meeting for the rules readoption process following the workgroup activities, and planning for a Falls Lake session at the Water Resources Research Institute Annual Conference March 19 and 20, 2025.

Other Items – Forrest listed other items the UNRBA is tracking including the DWR Neuse Watershed Model/Delivery Factors for WWTP: DWR has scheduled a meeting on the final modeling report for January 28th. Forrest also noted the NC State University UNRBA and Jordan Lake One Water research study, and the impacts of PFAS/PFOS on treatment costs and local governments.

The next scheduled Board meeting will be March 19, 2025, at 9:30 A.M. at the Butner Town Hall.

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned.