

## UNRBA Board of Directors: June 18, 2025, Board Minutes

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The Board of Directors of the Upper Neuse River Basin Association (UNRBA) met at 9:30 A.M. on Wednesday, June 18, 2025, via an in-person and conference call/webinar. Meeting attendees are listed below.

Name	Affiliation
Wendy Jacobs (Chair)	Durham County
Russ May (Secretary)	Granville County
Ryan Eaves (Treasurer)	Durham County
Forrest Westall (Executive Director)	UNRBA
Reggie Hicks	City of Durham
Carl Rist	City of Durham
Michelle Woolfolk	City of Durham
Ed Buchan	City of Raleigh
Carolyn Bachl	City of Raleigh
Tirrill Moore	City of Raleigh
Wesley Poole	Orange County
Marilyn Carter	Orange County
Scott Schroyer	SGWASA
Vicky Daniels	Town of Butner
Meaghun Darab	Town of Hillsborough
Terry Hackett	Town of Hillsborough
Tim Karan	Town of Stem
Katie Cromwell	Upper Jurisdictions
Jim Wrenn	Upper Jurisdictions
Alix Matos	Brown & Caldwell
John Huisman	DWR
Rich Gannon	DWR
Georgana Kicinski*	City of Creedmoor
Aarin Miles*	City of Durham
Sandi Wilbur*	City of Durham
Kathy Cooper*	City of Raleigh
Ja'Nell Henry*	Durham County Soil & Water
Barry Baker*	Granville County
James Bryan*	Orange County
Sherry Wilborn*	Person County
Katherine Cathey*	Person County
Nancy McCormick*	Person County
Robert Hornik*	Upper Jurisdictions
Haywood Phthisic*	Haywood Phthisic
Donna Myers*	American Rivers
Lauren Strader*	Brown & Caldwell
Dan McLawhorn*	DFM Law Office
Steve Wall*	NC Collaboratory
Carleen Evans*	Winston, Williams, Creech, Evans, and Co., LLP

\*Attended 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, Marilyn Carter made the motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Vicky Daniels, and approved by the Board.

**Action Items -**

*Approval of Minutes, May 21, 2025, Board Meeting* – The Chair asked the Board if there were any edits or corrections to the draft minutes provided. Meaghun Darab made the motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Carl Rist, and approved by the Board.

*Treasurer’s Report* – Ryan Eaves presented the Treasurer Report for the period ending May 31, 2025. The checking account balance at the close of the statement was \$240,130.62, and the savings account balance was \$1,277,308.61. Following review of the report, Carl Rist made the motion to approve the Treasurer’s Report as presented, seconded by Scott Schroyer, and approved by the Board.

*Approval of FY2026 Contracts and FY2025 Contract Amendment for Dr. Martin Lebo* – Forrest Westall reviewed three FY2026 contracts and one FY25 contract amendment for approval by the Board. Each contract was considered for approval with authorization of the Chair to sign on behalf of the UNRBA as follows:

- Vicky Daniels made the motion to approve the FY2026 contract for Executive Director Services as presented, seconded by Georgana Kicinski, and approved by the Board.
- Vicky Daniels made the motion to approve the FY2026 contract for Modeling and Regulatory Support and Communications Support as presented, seconded by Carl Rist, and approved by the Board.
- Carl Rist made the motion to approve the FY2026-27 contract (2-yr contract) for Website Support Services as presented, seconded by Scott Schroyer, and approved by the Board.
- Georgana Kicinski made the motion to approve the FY2025 contract amendment for Dr. Martin Lebo as presented, seconded by Marilyn Carter, and approved by the Board.

**Informational Items -**

*Status of the Falls Lake Rules Readoption Process and Extension of IAIA Program* – Forrest reviewed the Rules Readoption schedule and stakeholder process to develop “draft-draft-draft” rules. He indicated that the Path Forward Committee (PFC) reviewed this preliminary version of the rules at their May 6, 2025, meeting. Following that meeting, comments were requested by May 20, 2025, compiled, and distributed to the PFC ahead of their June 3, 2025, meeting. Forrest indicated that the plan is for the PFC to approve a recommended set of draft rules at its September 2, 2025, meeting, for consideration by the Board at the September 17, 2025, meeting. Forrest also plans to seek Board approval of the recommended rules for submission to DEQ, DWR and the EMC. Forrest again noted DWR’s presentation to the EMC on May 8<sup>th</sup> and their reference to DWR’s efforts to develop their own set of rules. He also noted DWR’s Falls Stakeholder Meeting scheduled for June 24, 2025, and a UNRBA-DWR workshop to discuss areas of difference related to provisions under consideration for the revised Rules scheduled for June 20, 2025. The Board requested that the latest draft rule sections be distributed to the Board for their review and input. The Board also asked DWR staff present when they planned to release their version of draft rules. DWR responded that concepts would be discussed on June 24, 2025, and that rules would be distributed sometime after. The Board also

discussed the challenge of having two competing versions of rules circulating and strongly encouraged DWR to collaborate with the UNRBA on developing draft rules. The Board discussed the recently proposed House Bill 926 as an example of external parties taking control of aspects of the Falls Rules and the risk to the rules if DWR and UNRBA do not work together successfully to secure a set of revised rules that are realistic and workable. Forrest pointed out that the rules represent an extremely important impact on the UNRBA member governments and on the citizens in the watershed. He emphasized that every effort has been made by the UNRBA since 2012 to reach out to all interested parties to share and discuss the Reexamination effort. He also noted the unprecedented level of effort made by the UNRBA and the NC Collaboratory to develop the best water quality science ever compiled to support the development of a nutrient management strategy for any water system in NC.

The Board also discussed this effort, and it was noted that the UNRBA has invested approximately \$14 million in the study of Falls Lake, the management of the organization, and development of the draft set of Rules the UNRBA has been working on for more than six months. Steve Wall with the NC Collaboratory stated that the Collaboratory has invested over \$4 million in the study of Falls and Jordan Lakes. The Board reviewed a projected timeline for completing development of its draft rules and bringing them to the September 2025 Board meeting. The UNRBA anticipates it will take recommendations for revised rules to the EMC in November 2025 or January 2026.

Forrest also reviewed the progress and success of the Stage I Existing Development Interim Alternative Implementation Approach (IAIA). The current five-year term of the IAIA ends in June 2026. Given the rules will likely not be adopted until early 2027, the UNRBA will need to request an extension until the rules are readopted. The Compliance Group Committee will address this need at the November 2025 Board meeting. He also reminded the Board that the annual IAIA reports for the fourth year of the program, which ends June 30, 2025, are due to DWR with a copy to Forrest and Alix by September 30, 2025. The approved program calls for the UNRBA to submit a joint jurisdictional report by the end of November.

*Continued Rule Development for Jordan Lake and High Rock Lake Watersheds* – Forrest discussed the potential impacts of DWR's draft proposals for the High Rock Lake and Jordan Lake nutrient management strategies. He noted that the UNRBA team is continuing to monitor these processes.

*Modeling and Regulatory Support and Chlorophyll-a Update* – Alix Matos reported the WARMF watershed model, WARMF Lake model, and 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 emails concurring with the watershed and lake model development effort and final reports, stating that they have no additional comments. DWR is working on a formal letter and that was confirmed at the meeting by DWR representatives. Dr Marty Lebo will continue his work evaluating the need for a specific Falls Lake 303(d) assessment methodology and a site-specific chlorophyll-a criteria for the lake. Dr. Nathan Hall continues to support these efforts through statistical analyses of proposals.

*Communication Support* – In addition to the activities discussed earlier in the meeting, Forrest reviewed efforts to provide wider communication of the work of the UNRBA and our efforts to readopt the Falls Lake Rules. Upcoming events include status updates to the EMC WQC (July); planning for notice to additional stakeholders to be included when the draft goes to the Board in September; and planning for meetings with DEQ, DWR, and the NC Office of State Budget Management to continue progress on rules readoption.

*Other Items* – Forrest listed other items the UNRBA is tracking including 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 September 17, 2025, at 9:30 A.M. at the Butner Town Hall.

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned.