

UNRBA Board of Directors: January 21, 2026, Board Minutes

The Board of Directors of the Upper Neuse River Basin Association (UNRBA) met at 9:30 A.M. on Wednesday, January 21, 2026, 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
Carl Rist	City of Durham
Kieu Tran	City of Durham
Michelle Woolfolk	City of Durham
Ed Buchan	City of Raleigh
Tirrill Moore	City of Raleigh
Wesley Poole	Orange County
Chris Summerlin	SGWASA
Jim Wrenn	Upper Jurisdictions
Alix Matos	Brown & Caldwell
John Huisman	DWR
Darryl Moss*	City of Creedmoor
Carolyn Bachl*	City of Raleigh
McKenzie Bradshaw*	Durham County
David Harris*	Durham County Soil & Water
Barry Baker*	Granville County
Marilyn Carter*	Orange County
Sherry Wilborn*	Person County
Jennifer Ganser*	Town of Butner
Terry Hackett*	Town of Hillsborough
Tim Karan*	Town of Stem
Nick Nolte*	Town of Wake Forest
Katie Cromwell*	Upper Jurisdictions
Robert Hornik*	Upper Jurisdictions
Julie Coco*	Wake County
Nancy Daly*	Wake County
Haywood Phthisic*	Lower Neuse River Basin Association
Donna Myers*	American Rivers
Dan McLawhorn*	Smith Anderson
Carleen Evans*	Winston, Williams, Creech, Evans, and Co., LLP
Anne Coan*	NC Farm Bureau

*Attended meeting virtually

Welcome and Recognition

The Chair, Wendy Jacobs, called the meeting to order and welcomed all those participating. Wendy asked if any of the Board Directors have any “conflict of interest” issues with any agenda items, and no conflicts were identified. The Vice Chair called the roll, and 12 of 14 members were present for a quorum. The Chair asked if there were any amendments to the agenda. Being none, Ed Buchan made the motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Georgana Kicinski, and approved by the Board.

Action Items of the Board

Approval of Minutes, November 19, 2025, Board Meeting – The Chair asked the Board if there were any edits or corrections to the draft minutes provided. Hearing none, Russ May made the motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Marilyn Carter, and approved by the Board.

Treasurer’s Report – Forrest summarized the amount remaining in the legal fund. Ryan Eaves presented the Treasurer’s Report for the period ending December 31, 2025. The checking account balance at the close of the statement was \$589,689.81, and the savings account balance was \$1,299,972.67 (a copy of the Treasurer’s Report is posted on the UNRBA website). Following review of the report, Georgana Kicinski made the motion to approve the Treasurer’s Report as presented, seconded by Ed Buchan, and approved by the Board.

Officer Elections – At the November 19, 2025, Board meeting, the Board appointed Carl Rist, Terry Hackett, Ed Buchan, and Georgana Kicinski to the Officer Nominating Committee. Carl Rist presented the recommendations of the Committee to re-elect the Officers for the Board as follows: Wendy Jacobs, Chair; Jane Harrison, Vice Chair; Russ May, Secretary; and Ryan Eaves, Treasurer. Following discussion, no additional nominations were made. Georgana Kicinski made the motion to appoint the individuals nominated, Ed Buchan seconded, and the Board approved.

Informational Items

Personnel Committee Report – At the November 19, 2025, Board meeting, the Board appointed Wendy Jacobs, Jane Harrison, Russ May, Ryan Eaves, Reggie Hicks, Kathy Cooper, Ed Buchan, and Jim Wrenn to the Personnel Committee. The Committee met on December 3, 2025, to discuss the Executive Directors Services and support team. Ryan Eaves drafted a summary report from the meeting and the activities conducted in 2025. Wendy Jacobs presented the report to the Board and expressed appreciation for the work of the Executive Director in supporting the UNRBA with its goals and priorities. Wendy described the challenges with the current contract with McGill Associates and indicated that the Committee had appointed Jim Wrenn to work with Forrest on potential solutions. Based on those discussions, the Committee will report at the March 2026 Board meeting and make a recommendation.

Background and Status of the Falls Lake Rules Readoption Process – Forrest briefly reviewed the work of the UNRBA to support the Falls Rules Readoption Process and directed new members to review the addendum provided at the bottom of the agenda for a summary of the work of the Association. He summarized the status of discussions on the New Development, Existing Managed Lands, Agriculture, Wastewater, and Purpose and Scope rules. The “leadership group” which includes management from DWR, DEQ, and the Chair of the EMC met on December 2, 2026. The focus of that meeting was the wastewater requirements. Forrest reported that as follow up to the general agreements on New Development and Existing Managed Lands that John Huisman and Karen Higgins were designated to meet with him and Alix to discuss DWR’s revisions to these draft rules. The DWR delegation and the UNRBA team met in December to discuss those drafts. Based on feedback from DWR, he anticipated receiving updates of those two rules by the end of January. He indicated that they were scheduling a meeting to discuss DWR’s Draft Purpose and Scope Rule

in January and to discuss the wastewater rule in February. The Board discussed the UNRBA's standing request included in the Association's preliminary draft for an allocation based on 100% of permitted wastewater capacity, which was revised to 90%, and then reduced to allocations based on 70% for Durham and SGWASA and 80% for Hillsborough. DWR had suggested that the group agreed to work toward sufficient nitrogen allocation to get the wastewater treatment plants through the next 10 to 15 years, until the rules went through the next re adoption effort. DWR Leadership has stated that they appreciate the importance of the wastewater issue. The Board members discussed DWR's request for flow projection data to support an increased allocation and the available regional studies. Forrest also referenced the previous documentation showing that there has been a reduction of nearly 400,000 pounds of nitrogen loading to Falls Lake since 2006 and that an increased allocation would only be a portion of the loading reduction that has already occurred. The Board also discussed the need for the UNRBA to raise these issues with EPA. Forrest said additional efforts will be made to try and achieve reasonable, scientifically supportable, technologically sound, and cost-reasonable revised Falls Lake Rules.

Forrest summarized the benefits of the work of the UNRBA including the tremendous value of the exceptional science that can be used to develop a realistic strategy, the ability to negotiate these rules with DWR and press for appropriate rule conditions, and development of the investment-based compliance approach for existing development. DWR staff indicated that members of the Environmental Management Commission (EMC) had requested information on how the UNRBA's work informed changes to the rules and summarized the schedule presented to the EMC Water Quality Committee in January. The Board expressed appreciation for DWR attending the UNRBA meetings and the importance of working together on the draft rules.

Continued Rule Development for Jordan Lake and High Rock Lake Watersheds – Forrest reminded the Board of the DWR's 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.

FY2027 Budget Discussion – Forrest summarized the uncertainty around the rules re adoption process and the role of the UNRBA in the future. Provided that acceptable rules can be adopted and considering the long and short term needs for implementation, the UNRBA will need to develop a plan to implement the rules, support development of a site-specific chlorophyll-a standard for Falls Lake, evaluate and consider the level of monitoring needed in the watershed to support re adoption in the future, and continue to fund the legal fund for FY 2027, depending on the progress on rule re adoption. The Board requested clarification about the Executive Director Services Contract and how dues may be impacted relative to what was presented at the November 2025 Board meeting. Forrest indicated that as described during the earlier discussion of the work of the Personnel Committee, the Committee is continuing to discuss and would bring a recommendation to the Board in March. He also discussed that the PFC would review the recommendations at their March meeting.

Previously Approved UNRBA Meeting Dates for 2026 – Forrest reviewed the previously approved UNRBA meeting dates for the Board and PFC. These have been posted to the website.

Communication Support – Forrest provided online links and hard copies 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. In addition to the activities discussed earlier in the meeting, Forrest reviewed efforts to provide effective communication of the work of the UNRBA and our efforts to readopt the Falls Lake Rules to key stakeholders. Upcoming events, as noted, include follow-up discussions with the Chair of the EMC and DWR Leadership. Forrest noted that through Fred Andes, our legal advisor, the UNRBA met several months ago with EPA to discuss the assessment issue and will schedule a follow-up meeting with EPA as the process with DWR/DEQ/EMC completes its effort.

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. He noted that Jay Rickabaugh at NC State University offered to present preliminary results of the study to the UNRBA. Forrest will work on scheduling this as part of a PFC or Board meeting. He also

noted that the NC State study on streambank erosion has been completed and once the website is finalized to include a function to download the data, he will share with the PFC and Board.

The next scheduled Board meeting will be held March 18, 2026, at 9:30 A.M. at the Butner Town Hall with an option for remote access.

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

DRAFT