



Upper Neuse River Basin Association (UNRBA) Board of Directors (BOD) Meeting Agenda
March 17, 2021, 9:30 AM to Noon
[Remote Access Only \(see last page for instructions\)](#)

Materials related to this BOD Meeting have been placed on the UNRBA website unless noted otherwise on the [Meeting page](#). See items under the March 17, 2021 meeting date. A direct link to the meeting presentation is provided [here](#).

- I. Opening—Sig Hutchinson, Chair
 - A. Introductions, Board Member Comments, and Announcements
 - B. Roll Call for Quorum
 - C. Identification of any Conflicts
 - D. Review and Approval of Agenda
 - E. Cancellation of the May 19, 2021 Board Meeting

II. Action Items

- A. Approval of [January 20, 2021 Draft Board Minutes](#)
- B. Approval of the [Treasurer's Report](#)
- C. Presentation for Approval, FY 2022 Budget

Item Summary (Forrest Westall): The UNRBA normally approves the upcoming Fiscal Year budget at the March BOD Meeting. The prospective FY 2022 budget was discussed at the November 2020 BOD Meeting and at the January 2021 BOD Meeting. The FY2022 UNRBA Membership Fee [Schedule](#) and [Summary](#) are available on the UNRBA website along with the recommended [Budget Expenditures](#). A jurisdictional table is provided to show the FY 2022 budget as compared to the current FY 2021. Revisions for FY 2022 include an adjustment to the Executive Director Services line item that was approved at the January 2021 BOD Meeting and \$2,500 for a financial audit of the Association. The Executive Director recommends approval of the FY 2022 budget as presented.

- D. **Stage I Existing Development Interim Alternative Implementation Approach (IAIA) Program - Approval of revisions to the UNRBA Bylaws, the IAIA Program Document, and Formation of the Compliance Group Committee**

Item Summary (Forrest Westall): The members of the UNRBA have previously indicated that they plan to comply with the Existing Development Rule by adopting and following the IAIA approach. Based on the schedule in the Existing Development component of the Falls Lake Rules for implementation of the Model Program approved by the NC Environmental Management Commission in January 2021, a compliance program must be submitted by mid-July of this year and implemented upon submission. The UNRBA will vote today on three items for adoption and implementation of the IAIA to allow for program implementation beginning in July 2021. The first item is a roll call vote to affirm individual local government participation in the IAIA and concurrence with [IAIA Program Document](#). This includes the minimum investment levels specified in the IAIA Program Document and summarized in the meeting presentation. The second item is a roll call vote to adopt the [revised UNRBA Bylaws](#) which include the IAIA Program Document. The third item is a roll call vote to form a Compliance Group Committee (CGC) which will be composed of the Board Directors of the participating jurisdictions. The UNRBA Board Chair and Vice Chair would serve in those roles for the CGC. In the absence of Board Directors, alternates could serve on the CGC consistent with the provisions for operation of the Board. Following these three votes, next steps for implementing the IAIA by July 1, 2021 will be discussed.

III. Status Reports and Informational Items

A. Summary of Past Communication Efforts and Future Planning

Item Summary (Forrest Westall and Alix Matos): At the January 2021 Board meeting, the new Board members requested a summary of the UNRBA's communications efforts. The Executive Director provided a summary via email. The UNRBA Communications Plan and past communication efforts will also be discussed at today's Board meeting. Future activities will also be discussed. The Executive Director and communications team continue planning efforts with the UNC Collaboratory on the joint symposium, and a "save the date" has been distributed for May 19, 2021. The May Board meeting has been cancelled to accommodate this event and maximize participation by UNRBA Board members and those in the PFC. This decision was based on the May 19th already being set for the Board meeting. The purpose of the symposium is to inform Falls Lake stakeholders of recent UNC Collaboratory research and how those study results will be referenced and incorporated into the UNRBA efforts to re-examine the Falls Nutrient Management Strategy. The symposium is free, but registration is required; register by [clicking here](#). The UNRBA Technical Stakeholder Workshop has been postponed until FY2022 due to COVID-19 and the Collaboratory/UNRBA Symposium. The Board will continue to discuss external stakeholder communication needs.

B. UNRBA Comments on Proposed Chlorophyll-a Site Specific Standards for High Rock Lake

Item Summary (Forrest Westall, Jay Sauber): The Board authorized (January 2021) the Executive Director and the UNRBA subject matter experts to comment on the proposed High Rock Lake (HRL) site specific chlorophyll-a criteria. The HRL site specific standard proposal was expected to be put before the EMC Water Quality Committee (WQC) in March and the full EMC in May. However, the proposal has been delayed and was not presented at the March WQC meeting. The delay was described as additional time to consider comments from the Compliance Implementation Committee (CIC) and the U.S. EPA. We hope the previous comments from the UNRBA will also be considered. DWR staff have suggested that the EMC WQC will consider a HRL proposal at the May meeting and the Full EMC may review it in July to determine if the proposed site-specific standard will go to public notice. The UNRBA will draft comments on the proposal once it has been released.

C. Update - DWR 2020 Integrated Report (IR) and 303(d) Assessments

Item Summary (Jay Sauber): The DWR draft Integrated Water Quality Assessment Report and the 303(d) list for 2020 were previously anticipated for June 2020. DWR issued public releases for these two documents on February 1, 2021. The 2020 assessment includes data collected from 2014 to 2018.

- The 2020 Draft Integrated Report resulted in chlorophyll-a standards attainment in only one out of twelve Falls Lake segments. The 2020 Draft Integrated Report did not include any data from the NCSU Center for Applied Aquatic Ecology.
- The UNRBA asked DWR to clarify why third-party data collected in Falls Lake was not included in the 2020 assessment. DWR indicated that CAAE did not submit data for the 2020 Assessment. CAAE Data collected in 2014, 2015, and 2016 were included in the 2018 assessment but excluded from the 2020 assessment. The UNRBA has not yet submitted formal comments on the draft 2020 IR pending a final decision from DWR concerning use of CAAE data from 2014, 2015, and 2016.

D. Statistical Model Development and Regulatory Options for the Chlorophyll-a Water Quality Standard

Item Summary (Forrest Westall): On October 4th the UNRBA Legal Group discussed the FY2021 scope of work with Barnes and Thornburg relative to their legal support to the UNRBA. The discussion included the modeling team and plans for utilizing the statistical modeling effort to support the development of relationships between

the water quality parameters and use support. Development of a site-specific chlorophyll-a standard represents an important consideration for a revised Falls Lake management strategy. A Technical Advisors Workgroup to support these efforts will provide input to the statistical modelers and the legal group and report to the MRSW and PFC.

E. Modeling and Regulatory Support (MRS) Status:

Item Summary (Alix Matos): The modeling team is continuing work on the WARMF watershed model for water quality calibration and has begun model development of WARMF Lake. All datasets representing 2015 to 2018 have been input to the WARMF watershed model, and stream flow, total suspended sediments and total organic carbon have been calibrated preliminarily. Nutrient calibration for the watershed model is underway. The modelers are refining the calibration of lake level in the lake response model (EFDC hydrodynamic model) based on review and input from DWR and the UNC Collaboratory third party reviewers following approval of calibration approach by the MRSW. In preparation of the transition from model development and calibration to model scenario evaluation, the Modeling and Regulatory Support Workgroup (MRSW) and PFC have formed two workgroups that will provide recommendations for review and input from the larger groups. One group will recommend a scenario selection process and a list of potential scenarios to evaluate with the models. The other group will recommend reporting formats for comparison of model scenarios to aid in interpretation and decision making. The 319 Final Report (revisions to the WARMF model code) has been submitted to DWR to satisfy the grant requirements. The [Final Transition Monitoring Technical Memorandum](#) has been posted to the UNRBA website. The modeling team is continuing to work on the watershed modeling report.

F. Ongoing Discussions/Issues:

Item Summary (Forrest Westall):

- Communications:
 - Development plans are underway for a virtual UNRBA joint Symposium with the UNC Collaboratory being held on May 19, 2021.
 - Objectives continue to be reviewed relative to communication opportunities with stakeholders. To support the re-examination process and achieve broad support for the UNRBA recommendations, additional outreach to external stakeholders including DWR, DEQ, and other interested stakeholders is needed; coordination with local leaders to convey messages and facilitate outreach will be necessary. This is a huge undertaking. To be successful, this effort will require the support of the UNRBA membership, staff, and Board representatives.
- We have been hoping to have a face-to-face session with DWR/DEQ to review and discuss findings presented in the 2019 Annual Monitoring Report, but this remains a challenge. We will likely proceed with setting up a virtual meeting.
- Several interrelated issues dominate our efforts, including, the re-examination, 303(d) assessment procedures, need for a site-specific chlorophyll-a standard for Falls, NC Nutrient Criteria Development Plan, the work of the Scientific Advisory Council and Compliance Implementation Committee, and the evaluation work by the UNC Collaboratory are interrelated and connected to the Re-examination effort of the UNRBA. We will continue to engage these different efforts to help develop a set of recommendations for a revised nutrient strategy for Falls Lake.

- Continue to engage DWR in the model development process and the larger technical stakeholder sessions. The UNRBA technical stakeholder workshop planned for this spring has been postponed to the fall due to COVID-19 and to focus resources on the joint Symposium with the UNC Collaboratory.
- The legal group met on March 4th to discuss development of a Memorandum of Agreement with DEQ and a plan for scheduling meetings with the reconfigured leadership of the Department.

G. Closing Comments—Board Members and Chair

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- If you dial in through your phone, mute your microphone and turn down your speakers to **avoid feedback**
- Unless you are speaking, please mute your computer/device microphone or phone microphone to **minimize background noise**
- UNRBA meetings are open meetings; however, for this remote access meeting, please **limit the discussion to UNRBA Board Members** to facilitate moving through action items