

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

The Board of Directors of the Upper Neuse River Basin Association (UNRBA) met at 9:30 A.M. on Wednesday, March 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
Carl Rist	City of Durham
Kieu Tran	City of Durham
Michelle Woolfolk	City of Durham
Ed Buchan	City of Raleigh
David Harris	Durham County Soil & Water
Wesley Poole	Orange County
Marilyn Carter	Orange County
Katherine Cathey	Person County
Chris Summerlin	SGWASA
Jennifer Ganser	Town of Butner
Meaghun Darab	Town of Hillsborough
Dave Pavlus	Town of Stem
Nick Nolte	Town of Wake Forest
Jim Wrenn	Upper Jurisdictions
Alix Matos	Brown & Caldwell
Dan McLawhorn	Smith Anderson
John Huisman	DWR
Sandi Wilbur*	City of Durham
Tirrill Moore*	City of Raleigh
Dustin Brewer*	Durham County
Barry Baker*	Granville County
Nish Trivedi*	Person County
Scott Schroyer*	SGWASA
Robert Hornik*	Upper Jurisdictions
Nancy Daly*	Wake County
Don Mial*	Wake County
Lauren Strader*	Brown & Caldwell
Carleen Evans*	Winston, Williams, Creech, Evans, and Co., LLP

*Attended meeting virtually

Welcome and Recognition – Closed Session of the Board

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. Wendy called the roll, and 13 of 14 members were present for a quorum. The Chair asked Alix Matos to read § 143-318.11 governing closed sessions of public bodies. After Alix read the General Statute, Jim Wrenn stated the purpose of the meeting in the context of the General Statute. The Chair requested a motion for the Board to enter a closed session. Russ May made the motion to go into closed session, seconded by Georgana Kicinski, and approved by the Board.

Following the closed session, Wendy requested a motion for the Board to end the closed session and enter the open session. Marilyn Carter made the motion to end the closed session and enter the open session, seconded by Georgana Kicinski, and approved by the Board.

Welcome and Recognition – Open Session of the Board

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. Wendy called the roll, and 13 of 14 members were present for a quorum. Wendy reviewed the voting hierarchy described in the UNRBA Bylaws. The Chair asked if there were any amendments to the agenda. Being none, Marilyn Carter made the motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Carl Rist, and approved by the Board.

Action Items of the Board

Approval of Minutes, January 21, 2026, Board Meeting – The Chair asked the Board if there were any edits or corrections to the draft minutes provided. Hearing none, Meaghan Darab made the motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Ed Buchan, 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 February 28, 2026. The checking account balance at the close of the statement was \$486,234.54, and the savings account balance was \$1,306,291.58 (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 Carl Rist, and approved by the Board.

Amendment to the Smith Anderson Engagement Letter – Forrest Westall reviewed the amendments to the Smith Anderson engagement letter that were distributed to the Board prior to the meeting. The Board discussed the letter. Russ May made the motion to approve the letter, Georgana Kicinski seconded, and the Board approved.

Personnel Committee Report and Budget Approval – Wendy summarized the continued work of the Personnel Committee which included revising their recommendation on the FY2027 budget and the sources of funding for the revised budget based on the recommendation of the Path Forward Committee (PFC) on March 3, 2026. Forrest reviewed the revised budget, sources of funding, and impacts to the dues presented to the Board in November 2025. The proposed funding plan is described in the Board meeting presentation slides. The Board also discussed the five-year prospective dues projection. This projection for years following FY2027 shows that the dues may need to increase to cover additional monitoring in the watershed, potentially including other water supply impoundments in the watershed. Following discussion, Georgana Kicinski moved to approve the proposed FY2027 budget (\$812,815), use of unallocated funds to reduce the

total dues amount by \$203,415, resulting in total dues for FY 2027 of \$609,400; Katherine Cathey seconded, and the Board approved.

Informational Items

Status of the Falls Lake Rules Readoption Process – Forrest reviewed the work of the UNRBA to support the Falls Rules Readoption Process. 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 NC Environmental Management Commission (EMC) met on December 2, 2026. The focus of that meeting was the wastewater requirements. Forrest reported that as follow up to some general agreement reached on New Development and Existing Managed Lands rules, DWR authorized John Huisman and Karen Higgins to meet with him and Alix to discuss remaining concerns in DWR’s proposed revisions to these two rule sections. This group met in December and February to discuss the two drafts. They also discussed DWR’s Draft Purpose and Scope Rule in February. DWR has not provided a draft wastewater rule for review by the UNRBA. Forrest summarized the remaining key issues with DWR’s draft rules. The Board discussed their concerns with DWR’s draft rules including 1) the additional costs to their rate payers, 2) the risk of third-party lawsuits if the rules continue to reference nutrient load reductions in the Purpose and Scope Rule that are not achievable and not consistent with the frameworks for the other rule sections proposed by DWR, 3) concern with DWR’s proposed approach for developing a site-specific chlorophyll-a standard that does not specifically include participation by the UNRBA, and 4) the significant growth and population increases projected for this region of the state. Forrest indicated that discussions are ongoing to try and achieve reasonable, scientifically supportable, technologically sound, and cost-reasonable revised Falls Lake Rules. The Chair expressed appreciation for DWR attending the UNRBA meetings and the importance of working together on the draft rules. Forrest indicated that it is unlikely the rules can be finalized and a regulatory impact analysis (fiscal evaluation) completed by May 2026, based on the latest anticipated schedule provided to the EMC. John Huisman concurred.

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

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. Upcoming events, as noted, include follow-up discussions with the Chair of the EMC and DWR/DEQ Leadership. Forrest noted that through Fred Andes, legal advisor to the UNRBA, we met several months ago with EPA to discuss the regulatory framework for Falls Lake, and we will be working to schedule a follow-up meeting with EPA as the process with DWR/DEQ/EMC wraps up.

Other Items – Forrest listed other items the UNRBA is tracking including the NC State University UNRBA, Jordan Lake One Water research study, and the impacts of PFAS/PFOS on treatment costs and local governments. He also noted that the NC State study on streambank erosion has been completed and once the website is finalized it will include a function to download the data. When it is available, he will share with the PFC and Board.

The next scheduled Board meeting will be held May 20, 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.