



Wake County Water Partnership

Meeting Minutes

Friday, December 12, 2025

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Wake County Library Administration Bld.

Committee Members Attending: Daniel Wiebke, Chair; Jeff Adkins; Nancy Daly; Mitch Woodward; Leah Harrison; Marc Collins; Rachel Jones; Lisa Booze; Mark Spanioli; Emily Bateman; Lori Avent; Ed Buchan; Michael Wagner; Steven Quarcelino; Michael Kendall; Donna Myers

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

Daniel Wiebke, Chair

Item Title: Opening Remarks **1:00**
Daniel Wiebke, Chair

Item Title: Adoption of August 8, 2025 Meeting Minutes **1:05**

- Motion: Michael Wagner
- Second: Steven Quarcelino
- Approved

Adoption of October 10, 2025 Meeting Minutes

- Motion: Michael Wagner
- Second: Steven Quarcelino
- Approved

Item Title: Data Centers: A Regional Approach to Planning **1:10**
Terry Nolan, Wake County Senior Planner

- Wake County is convening municipalities to coordinate on data centers
- Coordinating with Central Pines on data center topic
- Focus on hyperscale data centers largely driven by AI
 - Recent inquiries require 300-400 MW
 - Potential impacts
 - Energy grid stress
 - Water availability and consumption
 - Environmental concerns
 - Economic impact
 - Nuisance issues (noise, appearance)
- Goal is to develop unified tools and guidance
 - Coordinate planning efforts across jurisdictions
 - Develop unified framework for evaluating and managing impacts of data centers on infrastructure, environment, land use, and community well-being
- Water Strategy
 - Goal: Effective management of water resources
 - Strategy of no potable water for primary cooling
- Apex request for rezoning annexation and proposed ordinance amendments

- Conditions
 - Require reclaimed water for cooling; prohibit groundwater for cooling
 - Limit when potable water may be utilized
 - Require pre-treatment that meets or exceeds local, state, federal requirements
 - Require on-site storage of reclaimed water for 24-hour period
 - Allow combination of cooling methods (air and liquid)
 - Require water and sewer study detailing anticipated demand
 - Require Water Usage Effectiveness ratio equal to or less than 1.25
 - Town may adjust flow of water when necessary during declared droughts or shortages
- Buchan: Requiring reclaimed water may not hold up legally
- Collins: If conditions included as part of rezoning, should hold up
- Jones:
 - Reclaimed water may not have quality needed for industry;
 - Pretreatment is big part of conversation-need for pretreatment before it comes to municipal utility
- Why data centers?
 - Potential to generate property tax value without requiring large investment in services
 - Nolan: Tax department stated that there is a lot of value when first built, but equipment depreciates quickly and challenging to place value on uses
 - Data center developers are willing to invest in whatever conditions are needed to get project approved
 - Kendall: In past drought years, industries using large amounts of water were focus for water reduction strategies; this would be challenge for data centers
 - Buchan: Challenge when you have to identify businesses to reduce water usage
 - Wiebke: Technology is advancing to address evaporative cooling; national conversation-bring own satellite nuclear energy;
 - Buchan:
 - Utility concern-losing water out of water cycle; concern with thermal pollution
 - Triangle Water Supply Partnership is discussing data centers
 - Jonathon Jacobs-Apex Water Resource Director
 - Rezoning request is key; all discussions at theoretical level
 - Consider downstream impacts
 - Focusing on trying to understand life cycle cost of infrastructure (staff, operations)
 - Important that everyone is prepared through UDO process
 - Collins:
 - Energy concern
 - Councils of Government are important to have in discussion; how will it impact region's rate payers?
 - Water has structure (guidelines/regulations) in place for water allocation, but less structure in place for energy usage
 - Adkins: Need to consider this issue at regional level
 - Daly: Community concerns can be challenging to address with nondisclosure agreement and lack of information

Item Title: Water Resources Navigation Tool

1:40

Nancy Daly, Wake County Water Resources Manager

- Comprehensive Planning Subcommittee and Education and Outreach Subcommittee identified development of this tool as priority
- Tool is intended to facilitate communication for county and municipal staff responding to customer questions; eventually to be public
- Phase 1: Confirmed municipal interest in development of tool
- Phase 2: Proof of Concept
 - Raleigh is pilot
 - Searchable online map
 - Stormwater, Drinking Water, Wastewater contacts identified by address or searchable by zooming into parcel
 - Next Steps
 - Develop documentation and send out for User Authorization Testing
 - Contact spreadsheet will be sent out for all members to confirm contacts prior to go live
 - Phase 3: Pull in additional municipal datasets across County
 - Phase 4: Public facing tool with educational resource links
 - Feedback
 - Like simplicity; hope there is additional information to direct staff/customers (ex. if customer interested in connecting to public utility)
 - Good to see outcome from subcommittee recommendations; opportunity to share additional information

Item Title: One Water Updates

2:00

Nancy Daly, Wake County Water Resources Manager

- Jordan Lake One Water
 - DWR would like for Falls and Jordan rules to closely line
 - January 27 DWR stakeholder meeting for Jordan Lake rules
 - Jordan has anticipated formal rulemaking in March 2027
- Falls Lake-Upper Neuse River Basin Association
 - Continuing discussion on Falls Lake Rules Update
 - Progress on Existing Development Stormwater and New Development Stormwater
 - Wastewater remains a challenge
 - Updates to EMC planned for January
 - Goal is to bring one set of rule recommendations to the Environmental Management Commission (EMC)
 - UNRBA compiling fiscal information to support fiscal note for rules
 - IAIA extension requested due to delay in rules
 - IAIA FY24-25 Fiscal Report: \$2,979,092 contributed to watershed improvement projects
 - UNRBA and DEQ working through model question regarding submission to EMC
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- Walnut Creek
 - October BOC tours of Walnut Creek Wetland Center supported by Water Partnership members
 - Watershed Action Team met in November
 - NCDEQ is developing mapping tool for watershed improvement projects in watershed
 - Subcommittees: Communication, Education and Outreach, Implementation
 - Partners Environmental Justice has social media presence communicating work in watershed
 - Watershed Learning Network
 - Graduation class held Expo demonstrating projects
 - Watershed Ambassador is actively engaging and connecting community with professionals

- Wake One Water
 - Public comment period wrapped up in October; 60 responses received
 - Finalizing revision
 - Plan to take to BOC in early 2026
 - Implementation Plan currently being finalized
 - More detailed actions as outlined in workshops
 - Next steps
 - Update Rules of Procedure to align with path forward
 - February 13th Annual Retreat will focus on setting up to move One Water Plan forward
 - Realigning subcommittees to workgroups that help advance One Water
 - Requesting that members serve in workgroups and tap into organizations for additional subject matter experts
 - Each workgroup should have member of Water Partnership
 - Survey will be shared to collect interest in workgroups
 - Retreat will be held at Beech Bluff County Park from 8:30am-1:00pm

Item Title: Subcommittee Updates

2:20

- Education and Outreach-Steven Quarcelino, Chair
 - Looking at possible 2026 field trip locations

- GSI Leah Harrison, Chair
 - Worked on outreach plan; developed spreadsheet of focus groups for outreach
 - Updated GSI StoryMap; incorporated more information and projects; posted on public website
 - Updated Stormwater and GSI Best Practices Document

- Comprehensive Planning-Marc Collins, Chair
 - Coordinating with Wake One Water; conversations on stormwater/farm/development interfaces
 - Participating in Tree Canopy Subcommittee

- Coordination-Jeff Adkin, Chair
 - Updated report available
 - Public utilities in Triangle Region are working on 50-year plan; shared information with EMC
 - Wake County is in moderate drought
 - General Assemble commissioned study to evaluate how IBT will be managed in state.

Item Title: 2026 Meeting Schedule and Water Partnership Retreat 2:30
 Nancy Daly, Wake County Water Resources Manager

- Wiebke: Based upon poll, meeting schedule will remain at same time; June and October meetings will be moved to morning to support field trips
 - February 13, 2026-Annual Retreat
 - April 10, 2026
 - June 12, 2026
 - August 14, 2026
 - October 9, 2026
 - December 11, 2026

Item Title: Membership Water Perspectives 2:40

- Mike Wagner:
 - Moving forward with IBT public hearings
 - Facts to clarify
 - Harnett County withdraws water from Cape Fear River and sells to Fuquay Varina. Fuquay Varina returns ~90%-100% to Cape Fear River.
 - Project investment with Sanford will happen regardless of IBT.
 - Conveyance project with Holly Springs running behind due to delay in EPA grant funding
 - Design-build project moving forward
 - Smoke tested 45 mi of sewer lines
- Leah Harrison:
 - Pursuing study to evaluate development of stormwater utility
 - Completing townwide stormwater inventory assessment
 - Working to develop resources to guide Council on stormwater practices

- Developing regional stormwater study of downtown; stormwater is hindrance to economic development; looking at regional solution
- Marc Collins
 - Town took ownership of neighborhood dam and open space property in fall; project previously visited by Water Partnership
 - Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU) Study
 - UDO Updates on stormwater requirements
 - Ability to incorporate greenways into farmland preservation easements strengthens partnership opportunities with town
- Emily Bateman
 - Draft of Farmland Preservation Plan complete; hope to take final to BOC in early 2026
 - Initiated feasibility study for stream restoration by State Farmers Market
- Megan Kerr/Theo Udeigwe
 - Reorganization of Environmental Services Dept.; Environmental Services Dept. dissolved; Watershed Management and Water Resources moved to newly formed Planning and Development Services
 - New staff added to Watershed Management; working on process improvements
- Lisa Booze
 - Progress on Master Plan
 - Moving Capital Projects forward (dams, rehabs, dredging)
 - Climate Action Strategy is live with public facing dashboard
 - Expanding sensors/gauges
 - Completed Swift Creek watershed model
- Michael Kendall
 - Developing nature playscape at Wetland Park
 - Looking at education on rezoning, emergency preparedness
- Mitch Woodward
 - Working with Dr. Bill Hunt on 3rd biggest parking lot in US at RDU; seven 1- ac bioretentions;
 - Landslide and streambank repair work ongoing in western US
 - Conducting streambank repair workshops in Wake County
 - Working on residential landscaping program, Nature Smart Yard; focusing on spring launch; soil testing with Center for Human Health and the Environment
- Mark Spanioli
 - Stream restoration and greenway project underway in Town Center District
- Ed Buchan
 - Raleigh launched new web portal
- Holly Springs updated Master Plan
 - Updates to Natural Resources, Facilities, Utilities and Infrastructure
 - Developing Sewer Master Plan and updating Water Master Plan – before Town Council in May
 - Asset inventory ongoing
 - Upgrade to water reclamation facility
 - Utley Creek Greenway Phase 2
 - Updating reclaimed water master plan

- Approved for self-delegation for sewer utility permitting
- Lori Avent
 - Updating Water Master Plan
 - Awarded \$2.1 million funds from Dupont Settlement
- Donna Meyers
 - Provided comment on Fuquay Varina IBT certificate, focused on modeling and climate projections; opportunity for partnering with Triangle Water Supply Partnership and looking at statewide IBT policy
 - Looking at UNRBA and JLOW and trying to advance One Water regulatory framework
- Daniel Wiebke
 - Seeing uptick in GSI requests

Adjourn

3:00