

Board of Directors Meeting

West Tennessee River Basin Authority

July 10, 2026

The Board of Directors meeting of the West Tennessee River Basin Authority (WTRBA) was held at 11:30 a.m. on Friday, July 10, 2026. Board members in attendance included: Mayor AJ Massey, Dr. Jim Byford, Mayor Gary Reasons, Mayor Steve Carr, Mayor Nelson Cunningham, Joe McKinnon, Representative Chris Todd, Mayor Robbie McCready, Brad Wheat, Mayor Rhea Taylor, Mayor Todd Pulse, Mayor Randy Geiger (via Webex), and Mayor Danny Cook (via Webex). Advisory Board members and other guests in attendance were Executive Director David Blackwood, Kris Gordon, Hugh Adams, Matt Fennel, Rudy Collins, Jake Rogers, Dustin Bennett, Md N M Bhuyian, Faith Martin, Hannah Rich, Dylan Hembree, Noah Hickman, Ranson Goodmen, Justin Marlow, Jai Templeton, Abbey Willard, Stefan Maupin, Kristina Earley, Lyn Fair (via Webex), Patrick Parker (via Webex), and Richard Watson (via Webex). Chairman AJ Massey called the meeting to order.

The following agenda items were discussed:

Public Comment:

Chairman AJ Massey asked if there were any public comments today. There was no response from the public.

Board of Directors Business:

Chairman AJ Massey asked if there were any additions or edits to the Board of Directors meeting minutes of April 10, 2026. Hearing no comment, Chairman Massey asked for a motion to approve the April 10, 2026, Board of Directors meeting minutes. The motion was made by Mayor Gary Reasons and seconded by Joe McKinnon. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

Executive Director Blackwood presented the member fees for our four new counties. He explained that the fees were weighted and determined based on county tax value and population with the resultant amount supporting the additional staff indicated in the funding package with the State.

The fee breakdown is:

- 1) Humphreys County's fee will be \$45,000.

- 2) Stewart County's fee will be \$25,000.
- 3) Houston County's fee will be \$10,000.
- 4) Perry County's fee will be \$10,000.

Chairman AJ Massey asked for a motion to accept the new county member fees as presented. The motion was made by Representative Chris Todd and seconded by Mayor Todd Pulse. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

WTRBA Staff:

Executive Director Blackwood shared that with the addition of the new counties we will be hiring two new full-time positions. The positions require a four-year Bachelor of Science degree with five years of work experience.

Executive Director Blackwood turned over the next few minutes of the meeting to the four student assistants to present their summer work so far with the WTRBA.

- Dylan Hembree is a student at the University of Tennessee at Martin. Dylan highlighted his interest in rivers and wildlife as a driving factor in his interest in working with the WTRBA.
- Noah Hickman recently graduated from the University of Tennessee at Martin. Noah joined the WTRBA this summer to learn about issues impacting West Tennessee streams, habitat restoration, mussel sampling in West Tennessee, and herp sampling at the Middle Fork Bottoms State Park.
- Faith Martin is a construction management and architecture student at Murray State University. Faith shared how she has been able to sit in on construction meetings, go on-site to see project progress, and is assisting with designing a rivercane project and native pollinator garden at the Native Species Center.
- Hannah Rich is a student at The University of Tennessee. Hannah highlighted her background in geology studies and sediment as an interest in working in her home area of Madison County. Hannah has helped this summer with monitoring work and planning/implementation of the native pollinator garden at the Native Species Center.

Fiscal Items:

Executive Director Blackwood reviewed the financial reports and charts with the board. Operating Funds (327.26) and Maintenance Funds (327.24) are on track and where we are estimated to be. Executive Director Blackwood stated that our financials are in good order. Copies of the financial reports and charts were included in the packets. Chairman AJ Massey asked for a motion to approve the

financial reports. A motion was made by Mayor Steve Carr and seconded by Mayor Gary Reasons. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

Executive Director Blackwood provided an update on Grants/Contracts.

- Removing the low-head dam at Trace Creek is now complete.
- Central Creek is ongoing with a target completion in August.
- Williams Excavating is the apparent low bidder on Running Reelfoot Bayou project and is currently working through the contract.
- Crooked Creek in Carroll County is in the preliminary design phase of an awarded contract.

Technical Services:

Executive Director Blackwood shared that Cold Creek Chute in Fort Pillow State Park has had a blowout. They have requested WTRBA assistance. Chairman AJ Massey asked for a motion to assist in reviewing and repairing the Cold Creek Chute blowout. A motion was made by Joe McKinnon and seconded by Mayor Gary Reasons. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

Civil Engineering Manager Kris Gordon explained that on July 6, 2026, there was a dam breach in Madison County. A landowner removed a portion of an embankment to drain a lake, and it caused a major release of water downstream. Water rushed out into other owners' properties, as well as washing out part of a downstream road. Gordon provided pictures, maps and video of the breach. Director Blackwood added commentary on the prevalence of dams on the landscape and that this particular dam was a medium sized pond yet still presented a dangerous situation. He indicated that further work on orphaned lakes was still essential to public safety.

Maintenance Services:

Kris Gordon provided an update on Amphibious projects:

- Work has been done in Hardin County, Chester County, Henderson County (partial), Madison County, and the Obion River (Trimble).
- Work is currently underway in Gibson County and working back to Hardeman County.

Kris Gordon also provided locations for Amphibious contract work:

- SFFD Twin Rivers – I40
- Mud Creek
- Lick Creek

- Nixon Creek
- Kail Creek
- Mud Creek
- Panther Creek
- Beaver Creek – Huntingdon
- SF Obion
 - Hwy 436 – Hwy 70A
 - Hwy 445 – Harts Mill
 - Hwy 89 – Hwy 445

Kris Gordon shared pictures of how our Operators can work on our equipment, even on the side of the road, to keep projects moving. We are thankful for our talented team!

Kris Gordon provided details of an issue at Cole Creek in Tipton County. The Tipton County Public Works Director has requested WTRBA assistance to add rock and stabilize downstream of a box culvert that is at risk of undercutting and potentially failing. Part of the solution will require work on a downstream property owner, so the County has requested a partnership project. Chairman AJ Massey asked for a motion to assist in stabilizing the box culvert. A motion was made by Mayor Gary Reasons and seconded by Mayor Todd Pulse. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

Special Projects:

Kris Gordon provided updates on our “Green Team”:

- Monitoring
 - White Oak
 - Middle Fork Bottoms
 - Cane Creek
- Biosurveys
 - Big Muddy
 - Trace Creek
 - Running Reelfoot
- Native Species Center (Greenhouse) & Site Plan Improvements
- Startup Plant Production
 - +- 1,000 trees for special projects
- TWRA Collaboration Mussel Surveys
 - South Fork Forked Deer
 - Hatchie River

- Middle Fork Bottoms State Park
- Habitat Planning
 - Deloach Creek
 - Cub Creek Phase 2

Kris Gordon shared updates on a couple of other projects. For Central Creek, the ARP Grant has about 30% left. This project is ongoing with a target completion date in August. For Trace Creek, the removal of the low-head dam is complete. Gordon provided before and after pictures, as well as videos, and shared that the creek is flowing very well now.

Kris Gordon closed out his time by sharing that the WTRBA staff is working on construction at Big Muddy.

Executive Director Blackwood shared the latest details with the Board of Directors as presented at the last Executive Committee meeting on the WET Center. The bids for the WET Center construction came in over budget by \$18-20 million. After discussing with the bidding contractors, there were several items that were delegated to the contractors to design or resolve that created uncertainty. The delegated items are what increased the bids substantially due to the unknown soil/water conditions, trouble finding suppliers, and timeframe. With the many delays, budget increases, and design questions, Director Blackwood feels it is necessary to hire/select a new lead design firm, and open the bidding to the normal bid process. The June Executive Committee heard this issue and recommended bringing this before the board. Chairman Massey asked for a motion to say officially that the WTRBA Board of Directors is in support of a new lead designer to ensure the project continues to move forward. The motion was made by Mayor Todd Pulse and seconded by Mayor Gary Reasons. All voted in favor and the motion passed. Director Blackwood added a comment that emergencies vary in their timeframes. Tornadoes are fast moving emergencies. Floods and droughts are longer duration emergencies. Public infrastructure and maintenance are slow moving emergencies that have regional consequences but are still emergencies therefore focus on the WET Center and moving it forward is important.

Regional Leadership/Outreach:

Executive Director Blackwood presented that he would like to attend a couple Missouri Valley Flood Control Association (MVFCA) meetings. The MVFCA Fall Congressional Meeting will be held September 27-30, 2026, in Washington, DC.

The MVFCA 91st Annual Meeting will be held December 3-5, 2026, in New Orleans, LA. Executive Director Blackwood has attended these meetings in the past and is requesting approval from the Board to attend this year. Chairman Massey asked for a motion to approve Executive Director Blackwood's request to attend and travel to the MVFCA meetings. The motion was made by Mayor Nelson Cunningham and seconded by Mayor Todd Pulse. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

Other Business/Adjourn:

With no further business to discuss, Chairman Massey called for a motion to adjourn. A motion to adjourn was made by Joe McKinnon and seconded by Mayor Gary Reasons.

Mayor AJ Massey, Chairman

Mr. Joe McKinnon, Secretary

Upcoming meetings:

Executive Committee on Tuesday, August 18, 2026, 10:30 am

Executive Committee on Tuesday, September 15, 2026, 10:30 am

Board of Directors on Friday, October 9, 2026, 11:30 am