

Lake Wylie Marine Commission
August 24, 2015
Good Samaritan United Methodist Church



Commissioners Present: Chairman Brad Thomas (Gaston County)
Vice Chairman Lynn Smith (Mecklenburg County)
Secretary Treasurer Ed Hull (York County)
Commissioner Peter Hegarty (Mecklenburg County)
Commissioner George Medler (York County)
Commissioner Tim Mead (Mecklenburg County)
Commissioner Robert Biggerstaff (Gaston County)
Commissioner Blanche Bryant (York County)

Commissioners Absent: Commissioner Neil Brennan (Gaston County)

LWMC Staff Present: Joe Stowe, Executive Director; Chris Clark, Legal Counsel;
Emily Parker, Clerk

Meeting Minutes

Item 1 – Welcome and Introductions

Chairman Thomas called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and welcomed everyone present.

Item 2 – Approval of Minutes

Chairman Thomas asked if any changes need to be made to the July 27 minutes. Commissioner Biggerstaff made a motion to approve the July 27 minutes. Commissioner Medler seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Item 3 – Approval of Agenda

Chairman Thomas asked if any changes need to be made to the August 24 agenda. Vice Chairman Smith made a motion to approve the August 24 agenda. Commissioner Biggerstaff seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Item 4 – Public Comment

Mark Perkins, lake resident, thanked the Cramerton Fire Department for putting out a fire on an island near his home, near Catawba Cove. The CFD's assistance is much appreciated and it shows good coordination among agencies around the lake.

Ellen Goff – Co-chair of the Riversweep Planning Committee. She had good news to report about Riversweep Planning. However, they had not anticipated Dale's Landing being closed for construction. So, instead of 14 convening sites around the lake, there are now 13 sites. Executive Director Stowe said that they are trying to work with the HOA near there to see if they will allow Riversweep to use their boat launch space for a half a day. The launch area is right in front of the brewery on the same side of the bridge. Ms. Goff added that further details are forthcoming. Fortunately, no one had signed up to be a site captain for Dale's Landing. See Item 11 below for additional Riversweep updates.

Item 5 – Stakeholder Reports

Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department – Officer Joye reported that it was a fairly uneventful month. Their lake patrol staff is down to three people. CMPD officers have been up fitted with body cameras. They assisted York County law enforcement in managing a recent drowning. The US Coast Guard brought their own boat to Lake Wylie this past weekend. The Coast Guard will be on Lake Wylie again in the next couple of weekends and will ride with the CMPD and the Coast Guard Auxiliary.

Gaston County Police Department – Officer Hamrick reported that they have taken their big boat off of the water due to mechanical issues. He noted that two GCPD officers were shot recently. Thus, law enforcement officers have been moved around to make sure all shifts are covered leading to less time patrolling the lake.

York County Sheriff's Office – Sgt. Richardson reported that there was a drowning at Tega Cay. He mentioned that dive training is still on and going strong. All YCSO boats are up and running. However, the water is down so low that there is little activity on the water. Sgts. Mabry and Richardson are currently the only two YCSO officers that are patrolling the lake.

NC Wildlife Resources Commission – Sgt. Laton reported on the danger buoy that was discussed at the July LWMC meeting in Belmont. The NCWRC will pay for the danger buoy. Sgt. Laton noted that that he was grateful that Utilities, Inc. was willing to cover the cost of the danger buoy. Executive Director Stowe asked if they will leave the temporary buoy and the white stake or take them out of the water. NCWRC will likely remove them and give them back to Utilities, Inc. Commissioner Hegarty asked about the location of the buoy. Sgt. Laton said that staff from NCWRC Engineering Services will handle the placement of the danger buoy. Sgt. Laton also noted that on Labor Day, NCWRC will have a big push for their On the Road, On the Water, Don't Drink and Drive Campaign. Also, a few NCWRC officers will go to a training session that will help them identify people that are impaired from substances other than alcohol (e.g., pills).

SC Department of Natural Resources – No report was given.

US Coast Guard – No report was given.

US Coast Guard Auxiliary – Rick Croasdale reported that they are expecting the Coast Guard to be on Lake Wylie either next weekend or the weekend after. The Coast Guard Auxiliary is down to one useable boat, due to lake level. On the topic of the loaner lifejacket boards – life jackets are being taken and not returned.

Mecklenburg County Land Use and Environmental Services Agency (LUESA) – No report was given.

Duke Energy – Ronnie Lawson reported that

- Lake level: 95.0 (target level: 97.0)
- Low inflow protocol: Stage 1 (target index at 82.9%)
- No dredge permits have been submitted or approved.

Executive Director Stowe asked Mr. Lawson about the status of the FERC Re-licensing process. Mr. Lawson said that Duke Energy is hoping to be re-licensed by the fall, but it could be by the end of the year. He added that FERC has asked questions and information has been sent back and forth between

FERC and Duke Energy. Chairman Thomas asked if FERC has changed any re-licensing criteria and Mr. Lawson said not to his knowledge.

Gaston County Cove Keeper – No report was given.

Lake Wylie Lakekeeper Report – Mr. CD Collins reported that contractors are grading sites, but are not necessarily paying attention to the silt fences they are supposed to have in place. They need to be ready for the next rain event. Mr. Collins and the other Cove Keepers continue to patrol the lake.

Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation – No report was given.

Tega Cay Police Department – Officer Vince Holland confirmed that they did have a drowning and foul play was ruled out. They coordinated successfully with other area law enforcement organizations to handle this situation.

Item 6 – Follow up on Request for Comments: Proposed HDD Installation of Fiber Optic Cable Crossing Lake Wylie – Hwy 74 Bridge, Gaston and Mecklenburg Counties (submitted by BroadPlex)

Chairman Thomas said that he and Vice Chairman Smith visited the site. BroadPlex will go approximately 3’ below the other utilities that are already under the riverbed. Chairman Thomas and Vice Chairman Smith did not see any problem with the project. Commissioner Mead made a motion to approve this project. Commissioner Biggerstaff seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Item 7 – New Construction at Palisades

Mrs. Beasley, a resident of the Palisades, spoke to the group about dirt that ending up in the cove from a nearby development site. She commented that it seems like the silt fences are not working. She shared photos and a video with the marine commissioners. This development is being built approximately one mile into the Palisades on the right. Commissioner Hegarty asked if there are silt fences in place. Mrs. Beasley said that there are silt fences in place, but they are not working. Commissioner Mead asked her to send information and any photos to Ms. Parker and she will send it to the marine commissioners.

Item 8 – Update from Subcommittee focused on River Pointe Camp Steer Cove Pipe

Commissioner Hegarty updated the marine commissioners on the subcommittee’s progress. Commissioners Brennan, Hegarty, and Mead put a draft paper together and submitted it to the group for review. This paper will be on the September agenda for discussion and will be put to a vote.

Item 9 – Update on Lake Maps

Commissioner Medler reported that he spoke with SCDNR Officer Beckley. Mr. Beckley told him about Garmin Basecamp. If you download Garmin Basecamp and pull up Lake Wylie, you will be able to see every marker on Lake Wylie (speaking specifically about South Carolina). The map contact in Clemson will just need to download Garmin Basecamp to access this information, however, the names of all the coves will not be included. The names of the coves can be inserted later. Commissioner Medler will call his contact at the map company and find out if he is in agreement with this plan (using Garmin Basecamp). Chairman Thomas asked if we could still get sample maps prior to printing. He added that it would be helpful to have assistance from Jerry Wilkins and others to help proof the map before final printing.

Item 10 – Tega Cay Update

Commissioner Brennan was not present, but provided the following report in advance of the meeting: *Pending the awarding of bids, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control - State Revolving Fund (SCDHEC-SRF) has approved the funding for the Tega Cay "Division I, Gravity Sewer Rehabilitation Project." But there has been a delay as the period for contractors to formulate the bids has been extended. Bids are now due on September 17 to allow contractors more time to assess the scope of work and provide meaningful bids.*

Item 11 – Riversweep Update (October 3, 2015)

Commissioner Brennan was not present, but provided the following report in advance of the meeting: *The fourth planning meeting was held on August 19. The Dale's Landing site will not be available as the City of Belmont is beginning construction on the new park. The boat landing is to be removed this week. Our web site is being adjusted accordingly and it is recommended that Dale's Landing volunteers register at the Tailrace Marina. Mr. Mike O'Neill representing the Miller-Coors Brewery – specifically Leinenkugel's Beer – attended the meeting to offer support for Riversweep 2015. We are working the details of his involvement which include tents and signage at the sites, prizes for pre-registered volunteers, and pontoon boat rentals to augment kayak use. Materials (gloves, water, tarps, etc.) are in hand. We are receiving pre-registrations -- 37 this week, including three Boat Captains. These numbers are historically similar to year-to-date pre-registrations from past years. What's more, we don't anticipate seeing any significant response until the second week in September, so TV and radio spots are being scheduled for September when registration has historically increased.*

Ellen Goff also provided a Riversweep update during Public Comment. It was noted that Commissioner Hegarty has ~80 weather radios for boat, site captains, and others. Commissioner Hegarty added that the Riversweep t-shirts are ready for approval (shirt color and ink color) this evening. The Planning Team changed the shirt design a bit from last year. The choice of t-shirt color was purple or tan. Two ink color combinations were shown for each t-shirt color. The marine commissioners voted. The Riversweep t-shirts will be purple and the design will be printed in white ink.

Item 12 – Treasurer's Report

Secretary Treasurer Hull provided the Finance Report. The LWMC's finances are tracking as they should be for the first quarter of the fiscal year.

Item 13 – Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Joe Stowe reported.

- a. Executive Director Stowe acknowledged the return of Marine Commissioner Blanche Bryant; everyone was happy to see her that night.
- b. Several months ago, Mr. Stowe gave Legal Counsel Chris Clark the Catawba-Wateree Water Users Group Report – a report that discusses the availability of water in the Catawba-Wateree chain for years to come. At some point in the future, the LWMC will be asked to sign off on it on this report. Legal Counsel Clark scanned the report and did not see anything wrong with it from a legal perspective. Commissioner Mead added that he has read the Executive Summary that goes with the full report. He said that the report is a well done, significant piece of work that this region needed. One of the best benefits that came out of putting this report together was the high level of collaboration that was demonstrated by communities and organizations all along the Catawba-Wateree chain.

Commissioner Mead made a motion that the Lake Wylie Marine Commission endorse the Catawba-Wateree Water Users Group Report. Vice Chairman Smith seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The vote taken and approved unanimously.

- c. Trey Knight is leaving the US National Whitewater Center (USNWC). Executive Director Stowe does not know who his replacement will be.
- d. Ted Hall wants the LWMC to consider assisting the paddling crew that is based in Belmont. The crew needs to leave the location where they keep their boats stored and find a new storage site. The crew does not have anywhere to go and Mr. Hall would like for them to stay in Belmont. If anyone has any ideas, please let Executive Director Stowe know.
- e. Nominating Committee – The Nominating Committee is meeting and will give a report at the September meeting. Legal Counsel Clark added that fellow attorney Katy Foss will fill in for him at the September meeting.

Item 14 – Chairman’s Report

Chairman Thomas did not have a report.

Item 15 – Clerk’s Report

Ms. Parker did not have a report.

Item 16 – Old/New Business and Commission Project Reports

- Water Quality –
 - Clean Marina/Clean Boating – Commissioner Biggerstaff reported that all Clean Marinas have been re-inspected.
 - Invasive Species – Commissioner Medler had nothing to report.
- Buoys – Commissioner Biggerstaff had nothing to report. Commissioner Hegarty added that in the subcommittee’s draft safety report, they recommend that the LWMC purchase three (3) danger buoys. It was agreed that it would be good to have some danger buoys on hand. Commissioner Hegarty made a motion that the LWMC purchase three (3) danger buoys. Commissioner Mead seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.
- Safety – No report was given.
- Recreation – No report was given.
- Public Information – Secretary Treasurer Hull did not have a report.

Item 18 – Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:57 pm.

The next LWMC meeting will be held on September 28, 2015 at Carolinas Healthcare System – Steele Creek Healthcare Pavilion (13640 Steelescroft Parkway, Charlotte, NC)