



Commissioners Present: Chairman Neil Brennan (Gaston County)
Secretary Treasurer Blanche Bryant (York County)
Commissioner Ellen Goff (York County)
Commissioner Smitty Hanks (Gaston County)
Commissioner Debi Chacharon (York County)
Commissioner Dan Hartley (Gaston County)
Commissioner Hunter Wilson (Mecklenburg County)

Commissioners Absent: Vice Chairman Peter Hegarty (Mecklenburg County)
Commissioner Dan Mullane (Mecklenburg County)

Staff Present: Emily Parker, Administrator
Chris Clark, Legal Counsel

Meeting Minutes

Mission Statement

To promote public policies and support regulations for the preservation of Lake Wylie and its wildlife and for the education and safety of the citizens who use this beautiful natural resource.

Item 1 – Welcome

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

Item 2 – Approval of Minutes

Chairman Brennan asked if any changes need to be made to the April 23, 2018 minutes. Commissioner Hanks moved to approve the April 23, 2018 minutes. Commissioner Goff seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and it was approved unanimously.

Item 3 – Approval of Agenda

Chairman Brennan asked if any changes need to be made to the May 21, 2018 agenda. Commissioner Chacharon moved to adopt the May 21 agenda. Commissioner Goff seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and it was approved unanimously.

Item 4 – Public Comment

- Don Clarke – Mr. Clarke addressed the LWMC and said that he used to fly medical helicopters out west. From this experience, he knows that carbon monoxide poisoning was, and perhaps still is, a problem at Lake Powell. A connection has been made between the high number of drownings on Lake Powell and the number of house boats and swim decks on the back of boats. Mr. Clarke commented that boats are not regulated for exhaust, and the exhaust coming out of a boat is far more toxic than what comes out of a car (which is regulated). At Lake Powell they found excellent swimmers who had drowned from carbon monoxide exposure. He noticed that this issue is not included under the Safety section of the LWMC website. Chairman Brennan asked law enforcement if this issue is something they focus on. Sgt. Mabry covers it in his boater safety classes, and Officer Joye said they also educate lake users about this danger.

- Vickie Holt – Ms. Holt had questions for the LWMC about the [large sewage spill](#) that happened on Lake Wylie in late April, including if the LWMC knows the total amount in gallons spilled. Chairman Brennan thanked her for her inquiry and said there should be a report on this later in the meeting.

Item 5 – Stakeholder Reports

Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department (CMPD) – Officer Joye apologized for missing the last LWMC meeting. He noted that both CMPD boats are operational, albeit one is fully operational and the other is partially operational. The US Coast Guard will be on Lake Wylie this week through the weekend and will ride with CMPD. Officer Joye noted that on Wednesday, May 23 there will be a multi-agency press conference at Charlotte Fire Department – Station 38 (12100 Shopton Road West, Charlotte, NC 28278) starting at 10:30 am. He said that Marine Commissioners are welcome to attend.

Gaston County Police Department (GCPD) – Officer Hamrick reported that their small boat now has the new SONAR equipment installed. They ran into a compatibility issue between new and old equipment, but the issue was resolved.

York County Sheriff's Office (YCSO) – Sgt. Mabry reported on a successful swift water dive training his team recently experienced. He noted that so far around 35 people have taken the YCSO boater safety classes and passed. He has trained almost all the Tega Cay Police Department as well. Sgt. Mabry said that the buoy at Crowder's Creek is now back in place.

Tega Cay Police Department (TCPD) – No report was given.

NC Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) – Sgt. Laton apologized for not being at the meeting last month. He noted that there is another multi-agency press conference being held on May 23 at 11:00 am at Blythe Landing on Lake Norman (on Highway 73 in Huntersville). Chairman Brennan asked Sgt. Laton to distribute Riversweep advertisement cards at the Lake Wylie press event.

SC Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) – No report was given.

US Coast Guard – No report was given.

US Coast Guard Auxiliary – Mr. David Wascher reported that the US Coast Guard will be on Lake Wylie this week and through Memorial Day weekend. He noted that he will start buoy monitoring soon, boat inspections are going well, and they are holding boater safety classes for the public and Boy Scout troops.

Mecklenburg County Land Use and Environmental Services Agency (LUESA) – Mr. Dave Ferguson reported on samples his team took last week. They will sample again in June and July. The July sampling will include metals.

Mr. Ferguson provide an update on the late April sewage spill. His team received a call on the afternoon of April 23 about a situation at the upper end of Long Creek near I-485; 20-30 dead fish were spotted in the creek. His team went out to investigate and they found a gushing sewage spill. He explained what led to the broken pipe and spill. The lake level was at 99' the day after the spill from repeated rain events. His team was able to set out no swim advisory buoys and take water samples. Mr. Ferguson said that approximately 15.4 million gallons of sewage was spilled. He added that because of the large amount of rainfall, all the of dams were open and water was flowing through the whole Catawba-Wateree system.

Duke Energy – Ronnie Lawson reported that:

- Lake level: 99.0' (target level: 97.0')
- Low inflow protocol: Normal
- No dredge permits have been submitted or approved in the past month.

Gaston County Cove Keeper – No report was given.

Lake Wylie Lakekeeper Report – No report was given.

Item 6 – No Wake Zone Request – York County

Mr. David Thompson, lake resident since 2016, presented his no wake buoy request to the LWMC. He lives in one of the first large coves north of the Buster Boyd Bridge in York County. He described the way the cove is shaped (like a Y). He thinks a single no wake buoy would solve safety concerns related to boaters speeding in and out of a narrow area back in the cove. Chairman Brennan laid out next steps to Mr. Thompson and asked for Marine Commissioners to make a site visit. Secretary-Treasurer Bryant and Commissioner Wilson volunteered to look at the area in question. They will work with TowBoat staff to get them there and report at the June meeting.

Item 7 – Revisit Additional Water Sampling Sites in South Carolina

Chairman Brennan addressed this item. At last LWMC meeting, the group voted to ask Mecklenburg County LUESA staff to collect water samples from the South Carolina part of the lake. In the last month, calls were made to SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (SC DHEC) and it was discovered that there is a SC DHEC website that lists water quality data, including for certain spots on Lake Wylie. Chairman Brennan found out that they sample at Windjammer Park (examples of that report were distributed to the LWMC) and Ebenezer Park. Starting on Memorial Day, SC DHEC staff will sample twice a month at these sites. Commissioner Wilson moved that any requests for Mecklenburg County LUESA staff to take water samples in South Carolina portions of Lake Wylie be held in abeyance until further notice, since water quality data is available to the LWMC at no cost through SC DHEC. Commissioner Chacharon seconded the motion. Discussion: Commissioner Goff requested that the LWMC hear from Mr. Brandon Jones with the Catawba Riverkeeper Foundation about lake areas that may need sampling. He suggested the sandbar at Little Allison because it is a popular swimming spot and because no one has sampled there in quite a while, including the Catawba Riverkeeper Foundation. He also suggested sampling back in Little Allison Cove. He noted that the sandbar is not under the jurisdiction of a municipality or county. Therefore, a main question is if penalties or fines are issued, how would they be enforced? Chairman Brennan asked Ms. Parker to communicate with SC DHEC staff to receive monthly water quality reports for Windjammer Park and Ebenezer Park. Commissioner Hanks suggested to first check with SC DHEC staff to see if they would add sampling at the Little Allison sandbar. If they will not or cannot sample there, then the LWMC can proceed to the next step. The vote was taken and approved unanimously.

Item 8 – Riversweep T-shirt Selection

Secretary-Treasurer Bryant presented different Riversweep t-shirt options. Of the t-shirt options, the light blue and vintage blue are of higher quality. For either of those shirts, the price would be \$4.95 per S-XL shirt and \$5.65 per for 2XL shirts. There was discussion about which t-shirt color to select. Commissioner Wilson moved that the LWMC select vintage blue as the Riversweep 2018 t-shirt color. Secretary Treasurer Bryant seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The vote was taken and approved unanimously.

Item 9 – Status of Transfer of the Southern Law Center to York County

Legal Counsel Clark reported that he checked in with the contact at York County, Stephen Patneaude. Mr. Patneaude said that the York County Attorney, Michael Kendree, is now coordinating this matter. Mr. Patneaude did not have any further information about the status of the project and suggested that Mr. Clark contact the Mr. Kendree directly. Mr. Clark contacted him and Mr. Kendree said that he had not been directed to pursue this issue at this juncture and added that additional fact finding may be needed at the County Manager’s level before that office can finalize a recommendation and course of action. He asked Mr. Clark to be the point person, and Mr. Clark agreed to be the point person for the LWMC on this matter.

Item 10 – Treasurer’s Report

Secretary Treasurer Bryant provided the Treasurer’s report. She gave an overview of the LWMC financials as of April 30, 2018.

Item 11 – Review Draft Proposed FY 19 Budget and Draft Proposed FY 18 Budget Amendment

Commissioner Goff reported on behalf of the LWMC Budget Committee. She reviewed the Committee’s draft proposed FY 19 budget and the draft proposed FY 18 budget amendment.

*Commissioner Goff noted that the Administrative support budget allocation has not been increased in several years. The LWMC Budget Committee thought it would be a good idea to make a monetary overture to the LWMC administrative support, Ms. Emily Parker, in recognition of her superior work and contribution to making the LWMC run. Commissioner Goff proposed to put forth a monetary award for high quality service and recognition for her work, starting this FY and then moving forward, also include a recognition of superior service and merit going forward, and we would put that in one of the existing line items. Commissioner Goff moved that the LWMC put forth a one-time monetary award to Ms. Emily Parker in recognition of superior service. An award of 4% of Ms. Parker’s current salary of \$18,000 for LWMC Administrative services is recommended in the form of a gift card. Secretary Treasurer Bryant seconded the motion. Discussion: Commissioner Hanks made a few statements about CCOG in relation to the LWMC. He agreed with rewarding Ms. Parker directly for her quality service but suggested to not add a line item going forward. It was suggested that this award should be reviewed every year, perhaps in conjunction with a performance review. The vote was taken and approved unanimously. The LWMC thanked Ms. Parker for her service and gave her a round of applause.

In context of the FY 19 budget discussion, Chairman Brennan reviewed the proposed Sedimentation Project plan. Commissioner Hanks suggested that the proposed new line item titled “Native Shoreline Vegetation Program” be changed to “Lake Research Programs.” Commissioner Hartley moved to revise the draft proposed FY 19 budget based on the suggestion offered by the LWMC. Commissioner Goff seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The vote taken and approved unanimously.

Item 12 – Chairman’s Report

Chairman’s Brennan report was as follows:

- Accepted on behalf of the LWMC a Gaston County resolution recognizing the volunteers of the LWMC for the “...many services they provide to the County Commission and the citizens of Gaston County.”
- On April 27, briefed the “Schmoozers,” a local organization that meets monthly at the River Hills Marina, on the mission and work of the LWMC.
- On May 8, briefed the Gaston County Commissioners at their working session on the mission and work of the LWMC.
- On May 15, briefed the Lake Wylie Rotary Club at their weekly meeting on the mission and work of the LWMC.
- Note: The annual report to the Mecklenburg County Commissioners is scheduled for August 8, and a copy of the report is to be submitted by July 23. A presentation to the York County Commissioners is not yet scheduled.
- Northern Law Center Update – The Belmont Rowing Club adjusted the positioning of their proposed docks to allow for the topography along the shoreline; the City has approved the new revised dock position. Met with Perry Johnston to discuss how the boat house might be constructed and the possible cost of construction. Suggested that the Belmont City Manager consider budgeting funds if needed for a boat lift for the City’s fire boat.
- Attended one Montcross Area Chamber of Commerce event and discussed a brief to the Gastonia Rotary Club this summer with County Commissioner Worley, a Rotarian.
- With Commissioner Mullane, met with Dr. Sandra Clinton from UNC Charlotte to establish the parameters of the sedimentation project.

- Gained commitments of support for Riversweep from the R.L. Stowe Foundation, the City of Mount Holly, the City of Belmont, Lowes (Belmont), and Cabela's.
- Provided LWMC pamphlets and an Electric Shock Drowning poster to Cabela's for display in their boating area. Ordered another poster for West Marine to display.

Item 13 – Clerk's Report

Ms. Parker thanked the LWMC and did not have anything further to report.

Item 14 – Old/New Business and Commission Project Reports

a. Water Quality

- Clean Marina/Clean Boating
 - Meeting with NC State Clean Marina Officials – Chairman Brennan reported that two of four North Carolina marinas will sign up for North Carolina Clean Marina program. None of the South Carolina marinas appears to be interested in South Carolina Clean Marina program.
- Sedimentation (Policy, Presentations, Parity, and Education) – Secretary Treasurer Bryant asked what would happen if the graduate student was injured while doing research for the LWMC. Commissioner Mullane is looking into this question. Commissioner Hanks moved to proceed with the Sedimentation Study contingent on insurance for the graduate student not being the LWMC's responsibility. Commissioner Goff seconded the motion. Discussion: Commissioner Wilson asked if Duke Energy has grant money that could be used to help study implementation, depending on study recommendations. Duke Energy does have grant funding that may be able to be used during implementation. The vote was taken and approved unanimously.
- Invasive Species and Impacts of Native Plants on Shoreline and Water – No report was given.
- PCBs and Heavy Metals in Fish – Commissioner Hanks reported that he is looking at this topic and possibly another research project.

b. Northern Law Center – Chairman Brennan covered this in his report.

c. Buoys

- Buoy Maintenance – Commissioner Hanks talked with Terry Everhart last week. They have all the materials needed to make buoy anchors, etc.

d. Safety Programs

- Life Jacket Awareness – Secretary-Treasurer Bryant reported that two infant life jackets and two youth life jackets have been purchased for each law enforcement boat on the lake. That equates to four life jackets for each boat. 52 life jackets were purchased which means there are four extra life jackets available if needed. At the April meeting, the LWMC authorized Secretary-Treasurer Bryant to spend and be reimbursed for up to \$500 for life jackets. It turned out that the cost of the needed life jackets went over the authorized amount. Commissioner Goff moved to increase the amount reimbursable to Secretary Treasurer Bryant to up to \$665.00. Commissioner Hanks seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The vote was taken and approved unanimously.
- For Boat Rental Companies – Commissioner Wilson reported that there are 24 pontoon boats and two Jon boats for rent on Lake Wylie. There is one company on Lake Wylie that rents jet skis.
- For Paddle Boats (kayaks/paddle boards) – Commissioner Wilson reported that the US National Whitewater Center, another group out of T-bones, and Tailrace Marina rents kayaks and paddle boards. Commissioner Brennan asked if there is something in the works to spread the word about boater safety. Commissioner Wilson suggested that he should not be the person to approach other boat operators about safety. He will put guidelines or talking points together so that another Marine Commissioner can pick up this effort.

e. Public Information

- Schedule, tours, media spokespersons, branding, Chambers of Commerce, email directory – Commissioner Goff reported on the LWMC briefing book that will be given to each of the County Commissions. Presentations will be made to York and Mecklenburg County Commissions in the coming months. The briefing book is a living document that will be revised as needed.

Officer Joye said that CMPD lake enforcement could take some of the LWMC-branded life jackets to the press event on Wednesday. He noted that the Charlotte Fire Department set up press conference. Chairman Brennan asked about the format of the press event. Officer Joye will confirm schedule and locations.

**Note: It was subsequently learned that awarding a gift card to Mrs. Parker is not possible because laws prohibit government employees from accepting such gifts.*

Item 15 – Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:43 pm.