



Commissioners Present: Chairman Neil Brennan (Gaston County)
Vice Chairman Peter Hegarty (Mecklenburg County)
Commissioner Dan Mullane (Mecklenburg County)
Commissioner Ellen Goff (York County)
Commissioner Smitty Hanks (Gaston County)
Commissioner Dan Hartley (Gaston County)
Commissioner Hunter Wilson (Mecklenburg County)
Commissioner Debi Chacharon (York County)

Commissioners Absent: Secretary Treasurer Blanche Bryant (York County)

Staff Present: Emily Parker, Administrator

Staff Absent: 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

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 August 27, 2018 minutes. Vice Chairman Hegarty moved to approve the August 27, 2018 minutes. Commissioner Hartley seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

Item 3 – Approval of Agenda

Chairman Brennan asked if any changes need to be made to the September 24, 2018 agenda. Vice Chairman Hegarty moved to adopt the September 24 agenda. Commissioner Goff seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

Item 4 – Public Comment

None.

Item 5 – Stakeholder Reports

Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department (CMPD) – Officer Joye reported that the US Coast Guard was recently on Lake Wylie. Coast Guard personnel plan to attend a LWMC meeting before the end of the year to report 2018 numbers. Officer Joye said that their current lieutenant will retire by end of year. Officer Joye will plan to bring their new lieutenant to a LWMC meeting in the spring.

Gaston County Police Department (GCPD) – Officer Hamrick reported that one of GCPD’s boats was in a school parade on Saturday to honor the 50th anniversary of Gaston County Schools. This winter their boats will need minor maintenance.

York County Sheriff’s Office (YCSO) – Sgt. Mabry reported that they have been ready and waiting to deploy to the South Carolina coast, but have not gone yet. He acknowledged Duke Energy for how well they handled controlling lake levels during Hurricane Florence.

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

NC Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) – Sgt. Laton reported that NCWRC officers just returned from the coast. They conducted 96 rescues since last Friday morning. NCWRC personnel may be redeployed. He reported the numbers for Lake Wylie, Lake Norman, and Mountain Island Lake – 252 boats were stopped, 207 warnings were given, 115 citations were written, 16 were charged with BWI, and there was 1 fatal incident. He commented that Lake Wylie was good this year, in terms of having low numbers. He also noted that boating traffic has picked up. They conducted six boating and safety classes. NCWRC continues working with the Latin American Coalition to provide boater safety education to Spanish-speaking boaters. The NCWRC will have a booth at the Latin American Festival in uptown Charlotte this weekend.

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

US Coast Guard Auxiliary – Mr. Ray Webber was not present to report. He emailed a brief report to Ms. Parker and she forwarded it to the LWMC.

Mecklenburg County Land Use and Environmental Services Agency (LUESA) – Mr. Matthew Phillips reported that their new boat is operational. The LUESA team sampled on Lake Wylie today. They observed some remaining turbidity from Hurricane Florence. Mr. Phillips noted that the monthly fecal coliform sampling is done for the year and the two new sites at the River District development are being sampled.

Duke Energy – Mr. Ronnie Lawson reported that:

- Lake level: 97.4’ (target level: 97.0’)
- Low inflow protocol: Normal
- One (1) dredge permit has been submitted by the City of Charlotte.

Mr. Lawson noted that Lake Rhodhiss is the only lake in the Catawba-Wateree chain that spilled over during Hurricane Florence. Commissioner Hanks asked if the LWMC decides to follow up on the 2018 sedimentation study, how long it would take to get approvals to plant native vegetation. Mr. Lawson said that an application would need to be submitted, at which point he and other Duke Energy staff would review the application. Then Mike Abney, Senior Environmental Resource Manager, would review the plants proposed in the application and be part of the approval process. Mr. Lawson said that anything that is to be put in the lake (i.e., plants, docks, etc.) must be approved by Duke Energy. If someone wanted to plant something in the 50’ buffer, that is in the respective County’s purview, not Duke Energy’s. Mr. Phillips (LUESA) confirmed that Mecklenburg County has buffer rules in place and a staff person to enforce them. Commissioner Chacharon asked Mr. Lawson how long an approval process for planting native vegetation could be. He estimated 2-3 months.

Vice Chairman Hegarty asked Mr. Lawson if there have been requests for dredging because of Hurricane Florence and sedimentation going into Lake Wylie. He mentioned that Duke Energy received a couple of requests near The Bluffs (in York County).

Gaston County Cove Keeper – No report was given.

Catawba Riverkeeper Foundation (CRF) – Mr. Brandon Jones commented that our region avoided the worst of Hurricane Florence. He noted that there were eight sewer overflows, but contamination cleared out because of high levels of dilution. The CRF office flooded during the storm. He noted that Riversweep 2018 is coming up and CRF Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator Hillary Zorman is working diligently to prepare for this event.

Item 6 – Presentation on Wakeboarding Issues

Mr. Charles Workman was not present.

Item 7 – Riversweep 2018 Update

Commissioner Goff reported that Riversweep 2018 is right around the corner. She heard from Hillary Zorman that approximately 300 people have signed up to volunteer and 30 people have volunteered as boat captains. Commissioner Hanks commented that he arranged for two tractors to be stationed near the Buster Boyd Bridge. She noted that all but two site captains are returning. Commissioner Goff brought Riversweep 2018 t-shirts for the Marine Commissioners.

Commissioner Goff asked Mr. Lawson if Lake Norman has a grass carp program to combat the hydrilla problem in the lake. He replied that they put 10,000 grass carp into Lake Norman to combat the major hydrilla growth in that lake.

Item 8 – Treasurer’s Report

Secretary Treasurer Bryant was not present to report. Ms. Parker reported that the contracting process with Mecklenburg County for FY 19 is nearly complete and will allow the LWMC to receive quarterly payments from Mecklenburg County.

Item 9 – Chairman’s Report

Chairman Brennan reported the following:

Northern Law Center Update: The LWMC has received a copy of the site plan the Belmont Rowing Club (BRC) submitted to the City of Belmont. The northern law center boat house is located where soundings indicate there is sufficient water depth.

In early September, Officer Hamrick, Sergeant Knupp, and Chairman Brennan confirmed the Gaston County police boat length, draft, beam, and height. Perry Johnston of Dockmasters provided the southern law center boat house drawings to use as guides in drafting the drawings for the northern law center boat house. Commissioner Hartley and Chairman Brennan developed those drawings which Ronnie Lawson reviewed and approved as sufficient for the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) submission. The drawings have been provided to the BRC and the City of Belmont Planning Department.

On September 20, Chairman Brennan revisited the site with BRC representatives, their engineer, and the City of Belmont Planning Director. They determined that an adjustment of the point where the dock joins the boat house platform may be necessary. Will resolve week of September 24.

Annual Report to York County Council: On September 4, Chairman Brennan delivered the updated annual report which now includes the Shorescaping Lake Wylie recommendations of the completed sedimentation study. County Councilmember William Roddey asked how our lake water samples compare to other lakes. Mecklenburg County Environmental Supervisor Olivia Edwards provided this response which was forwarded to the York County Council clerk:

“We conduct the same type of routine monitoring in Lake Norman and Mountain Island Lake as we do on Wylie. A general assessment is that Lake Wylie often has poorer water quality than Lake Norman and Mountain Island Lake (MIL). These three lakes are very different from each other. With Norman being so expansive and deep, dilution helps keep pollutant concentrations low. The major issues we see in Norman are impacts from Marshall Steam Station (temp and metals), hydrilla growth, and occasion fish kills when the lake stratifies and turns over. MIL is much smaller and shallower, and only has a few significant tributary inputs with McDowell Creek being the most impactful. Issues we see in MIL include metal inputs from Riverbend Steam Station and elevated turbidity in McDowell Creek Cove. The water quality in Lake Wylie is very much impacted by multiple major tributary inputs that are draining heavily impervious, developing areas. As a result, after a rain event, we see higher bacteria concentrations and turbidity throughout the lake.”

Chairman Brennan suggested that the sedimentation issues that plague Lake Wylie are a cancer on the river and accepted the offer on Councilmember Allison Love to have a LWMC member participate in their upcoming stormwater workshop. Commissioner Goff has agreed to attend that workshop.

Clean Marina Program: Chairman Brennan notified Harbortowne Marina and Pier 49 Marina that the LWMC is discontinuing our Clean Marina program in North Carolina so as not to undermine or compete with the state program. Both managers indicated they intend to join the state Clean Marina program, and Ben Solomon of the NCWRC will follow up with both managers.

Chamber Events: Chairman Brennan attended two Montcross Area Chamber of Commerce events. One was at the Belmont office of the Charlotte Metro Credit Union (CMCU). The CMCU has donated twelve \$100 coupons good for use at Target, Amazon, Harris Teeter, Walmart, or a restaurant of their choice. At the second event, the owner of the new Sub Station 2 in Belmont pledged gift cards for Riversweep prizes.

Belmont Rotary Club: On September 20, briefed the annual report to the Belmont Rotary Club.

Chairman Brennan mentioned that he spoke with the Chairman of the Lake Norman Marine Commission. He was impressed with the LWMC briefing book and good work being done for Lake Wylie.

Item 10 – Clerk’s Report

Ms. Parker reported that she is in contact with the LWMC auditor, Belinda Johnson, CPA.

Item 11 – Old/New Business and Commission Project Reports

a. Water Quality

- Clean Marina/Clean Boating: Commissioner Mullane did not have a report.
- Sedimentation (Policy, Presentations, Parity, and Education): Commissioner Goff did not have a report.
- PCBs and Heavy Metals in Fish: Commissioner Hanks did not have a report.

b. Northern Law Center: Chairman Brennan covered this in the Chairman’s report.

- c. Buoy Maintenance: Commissioner Wilson said that no one has called about misplaced buoys. Sgt. Mabry mentioned that SCDNR personnel is at the coast right now, so there likely will not be much communication about SC buoys on Lake Wylie for some time.
- d. Safety Programs
 - o For Boat Rental Companies: Commissioner Wilson talked about the Alcohol Law Enforcement (ALE) lake patrol program. His ALE contact, Tommy Shankle, brought over laminated information cards that include useful information related to boating and impairment. He would like to know if the LWMC can get more of them to distribute. Commissioner Wilson will invite Mr. Shankle to future LWMC meetings.
 - o For Paddle Boats (kayaks/paddle boards): Commissioner Wilson did not have a report.
- e. Public Information
 - o Media spokespersons, branding, Chambers of Commerce, email directory: Chairman Brennan noted that the Riversweep press release has been sent out and he did a TV news spot advertising Riversweep on WBTV on September 22nd.

Item 12 – Election of Officers

Legal Counsel Clark was not able to attend this meeting. He prepared Ms. Parker with text to explain the election process. Ms. Parker led the Election of Officers. She stated:

- For the position of Chairman: Commissioner Hanks said the Nominating Committee recommends Neil Brennan. Hearing no further nominations, Neil Brennan will continue serving as Chairman.
- For the position of Vice Chairman: Commissioner Hanks said the Nominating Committee recommends Peter Hegarty. Hearing no further nominations, Peter Hegarty will continue serving as Vice Chairman.
- For the position of Secretary Treasurer: Commissioner Hanks said the Nominating Committee recommends Blanche Bryant to the position of Secretary Treasurer. Hearing no further nominations, Blanche Bryant will continue serving as Secretary Treasurer.

As a member of the Nominating Committee, Commissioner Hanks recommended that in future years, the LWMC officers continue to represent each of the three contributing counties.

Commissioners Mullane and Hanks have agreed to spend time outside of regular LWMC meetings to determine next steps related to the sedimentation study. They are open to other Marine Commissioners joining their group. Chairman Brennan asked Commissioner Chacharon if she would join the committee so there is representation from each county. She agreed to do so. Commissioner Hanks mentioned speaking with staff at the Forestry Service. There was discussion about promulgating the Lake Wylie Shorescaping document Ella Wickliff created. It was decided to coordinate with the Mecklenburg County Soil and Water Conservation District personnel before proceeding.

Chairman Brennan asked Ms. Parker to add ‘Invasive Species and Impacts of Native Plants on Shoreline and Water’ to the monthly agenda.

Item 13 – Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:44 pm.