



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

Commissioners Absent: Commissioner Dan Mullane (Mecklenburg County)

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

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.

Meeting Minutes

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 February 25, 2019 minutes. Vice Chairman Hegarty moved to approve the February 25, 2019 minutes. Secretary Treasurer Bryant 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 March 25, 2019 agenda. Commissioner Hanks moved to adopt the March 25, 2019 agenda. Commissioner Hartley seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

Item 4 – Public Comment

RiverPointe resident Jed Schloss addressed the LWMC. He spoke on the topic of the exposed pipe that is being replaced in the cove in front of his home at RiverPointe. While the pipe replacement is going well, he noted that there are problems related to the shoreline being damaged and not attended to in this process. Mr. Schloss asked why someone or an organization is not paying for rip rap to be installed. He should not be responsible for paying for it because that piece of shoreline is not his land. If Duke Energy owns the land, they should fix it. There is a lot of runoff going into that cove.

Vice Chairman Hegarty added that he spoke with people at Row Boat Dock and Dredge who are handling the dredging in the cove. Rain has caused delays in the dredging process. Row Boat thinks they will have it finished in next couple of weeks. He noted that they are going to put rip rap on top of the pipe to keep it in place. Vice Chairman Hegarty asked Mr. Ronnie Lawson with Duke Energy about securing the shoreline. Mr. Lawson said securing the shoreline was not in their application. Vice Chairman Hegarty said that files on this project go back to 2014. Row Boat says they will clean up and repair the shoreline, but they will not do anything about the large culvert coming out of the street. The FERC permit does not allow them to go any further than what they are doing now. There are several other pipes running into the stream and a strangely colored substance is flowing into the water. Mr. Schloss called the EPA to come out and view the situation. Vice Chairman Hegarty is going to see what avenues he can take to help make progress in this matter.

Item 5 – Stakeholder Reports

Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department (CMPD) – Officer Joye introduced several CMPD staff members who are new to the lake patrol unit: Lieutenant DeMarco Jeter, Officer Fran Reitano (replaced Brian Carey), and Officer Anthony Farralli (replaced their part time staff person). Officer Joye had a productive trip to Pacific Northwest to test their new boat. The boat arrived in Charlotte last week and it is housed at the Charlotte Fire Department boat house. He let the LWMC know that they are invited to see the new boat anytime. Officer Joye mentioned the case of the missing woman and that they found her car. Law enforcement used SONAR, helicopter, and conducted a dive search earlier in the day and did not find anything. CMPD plans to speak with Gaston County Police Department about borrowing their particular kind of SONAR equipment. Sgt. Mabry with York County Sheriff’s Office assisted CMPD in today’s dive search.

Gaston County Police Department (GCPD) – Officer Hamrick reported that it will be another couple of weeks before an announcement is made about who will join the GCPD lake unit. He also praised the good work done by the mechanics that service their boats.

York County Sheriff’s Office (YCSO) – Sgt. Mabry reported that he helped CMPD during the dive search for the missing woman. This past Saturday Sgt. Mabry taught his first boater safety class of the year. All nineteen students passed the class.

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

Mecklenburg County ABC Board Law Enforcement – No report was given.

NC Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) – Sgt. Laton reported that they are focusing on boat maintenance and getting ready for boating season. Turkey hunting season starts in early April, so their focus will be on land for the next month or more. They lost one officer through promotion but should get a new officer soon. Chairman Brennan asked about the Yachtsman Marina no wake zone buoy petition and if it is approved, if the NCWRC pays for the buoys. Commissioner Hanks said that NCWRC would not pay for those buoys.

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

US Coast Guard (USCG) – No report was given.

US Coast Guard Auxiliary – Mr. Ray Webber was not present, but emailed Ms. Parker his report earlier in the week and Ms. Parker will forward it to the LWMC.

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

Duke Energy – Mr. Ronnie Lawson reported that:

- Lake level: 98.6' (target level: 97.0')
- Low inflow protocol: Normal
- No new dredge permits have been approved. A dredging moratorium will be in place for fish spawning season which is from March 1 – June 30.

Mr. Lawson added that Duke Energy will conduct maintenance on their hydro station for two months. During that time, water levels will be raised to between 97' and 99.5'.

Gaston County Cove Keeper – No report was given.

Catawba Riverkeeper Foundation (CRF) – No report was given.

Alcoholic Beverage Control Board Law Enforcement – No report was given.

York County Councilmember Allison Love (District 2) was present and reported to the LWMC about York County's progress in updating their storm water ordinance. The updated storm water ordinance will include some new elements and heightened enforcement measures including stop work orders and fines that will be levied immediately. In terms of stop work orders and fines, she commented that a stop work order is oftentimes more effective than a financial fine. Councilmember Love added that once the rewritten ordinance is finalized and approved, it will make a difference. Chairman Brennan asked if the fine could be higher than \$1,000 per day. She commented that they tried to set the daily fine at \$10,000. This figure was opposed and it was reduced to \$1,000 per day. Councilmember Love added that it is possible that the conversation about raising daily fine amounts could be revisited.

Item 6 – Allen Steam Plant Tour: Recap

Chairman Brennan reported that the LWMC enjoyed the tour of Allen Steam Plant. Plant Manager Terry Tuck and other staff were engaging and well informed. Plant staff took the LWMC on a windshield tour of the plant. Commissioner Chacharon commented that the whole property appeared clean.

Item 7 – Treasurer's Report

Secretary Treasurer Bryant reported the following:

- Mecklenburg and York counties are paid through Q3 (March 31) and Gaston County is paid fully for the year.
- Ms. Parker will send invoices to Mecklenburg and York counties for Q4 next week.
- FY19-20 funding requests have been submitted to each of the three contributing counties (\$25,000 per county).
- LWMC needs to start thinking about assembling a budget subcommittee to draft the FY20 budget and address any FY19 budget amendments.
- Commissioners Goff, Hartley, and Mullane served on the budget subcommittee in 2018.
- The FY20 draft budget will be presented to the LWMC at the May 20 meeting and approved at the June 24 meeting.

Chairman Brennan asked for volunteers to serve on the budget subcommittee. Commissioners Goff, Hartley, and Mullane either volunteered or were assigned to serve on this group. Ms. Parker will follow up the subcommittee about setting a time to have a conference call.

Item 8 – Chairman’s Report

Chairman Brennan reported the following:

Northern Law Center: The final land survey for the Gaston County Police Department and the Belmont Fire Department boat house is scheduled for early April. The survey will include elevations which will enable finalizing the dimensions of the gangway needed to access the boat house. Once that survey is in hand, the boat house drawings for the FERC submission can be finalized. The Belmont Rowing Club is planning a work day at the new site on the weekend of April 6-7 to take down small trees and removing dead wood and under growth. The police and firefighters have been notified of the work day.

Water Quality: Chairman Brennan followed up with NC DENR regarding the disconnect between the standards the Catawba Riverkeeper Foundation cites and those NC DENR uses. He has not heard back yet but will follow up.

Meetings: Chairman Brennan attended the March 22 Gaston County Commissioners Forum sponsored by the Montcross Chamber of Commerce. He also participated in a conference call convened by NC State Senator Natasha Marcus regarding the possibility of reviving the Mountain Island Lake Marine Commission. Chairman Brennan offered assistance in re-storing that marine commission if it is re-established by the counties that border Mountain Island Lake.

2020 Boat Show: Chairman Brennan reserved the LWMC’s booth location for the 2020 Mid-Atlantic Boat Show. It will be in the same location as in recent years, next to the law enforcement booth.

Chairman Brennan added that the Clean Marina checklist for South Carolina marinas has been finalized. Ms. Parker sent a cover letter and checklist to several South Carolina marinas on Lake Wylie earlier today.

Item 9 – Clerk’s Report

Ms. Parker did not have a report.

Item 10 – Old/New Business and Commission Project Reports

a. Water Quality

- Clean Marina/Clean Boating: Chairman Brennan had nothing further to report.
- Sedimentation: Commissioner Goff had nothing further to report.
- Shoreline Plantings: Commissioner Hanks spoke with a Belmont Rowing Center staff member and she is open to the idea of planting native plants for shoreline stabilization at their site, even though this may be a couple of years away. Chairman Brennan suggested that Commissioner Hanks ask about where Belmont’s authority comes into play, as related to the shoreline at the Belmont Rowing Center. Commissioner Wilson asked Mr. Lawson about the swamp area on Windy Gap Road and if there is anything that can be done to make that area look better. Vice Chairman Hegarty asked about planting native plants for shoreline stabilization at the RiverPointe site referred to during Public Comment.
- PCBs and Heavy Metals in Fish: Commissioner Hanks had nothing further to report.

b. Buoy Maintenance: Commissioner Hanks reported he and Mr. Terry Everhart surveyed the buoys in part of the lake. They found that of the 40 buoys should be in place, 19 of these buoys are missing. Of the six buoys they found, maybe two or three could be useable.

Commissioner Hanks moved that the LWMC purchase 20 buoys. Commissioner Goff seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

c. Safety Programs

- For Boat Rental Companies: Commissioner Wilson reported that he took the NCWRC's online boating safety course. It cost \$45 and took around 5 hours to complete. From a rental boat standpoint, this course is too costly and too in depth for the renting public. Commissioner Wilson reach out to company that made online course. A vice president with the company called him back and said that they have a shorter online course for daily boat rental. His company would be interested in producing a mini online course for North Carolina. Commissioner Wilson commented that this course may be on state-wide scale. Chairman Brennan asked about cost and Commissioner Wilson did not know about cost details. Chairman Brenna suggested that Commissioner Wilson follow up about cost and other pertinent details. Commissioner Wilson asked Sgt. Laton about who he could speak with at NCWRC about the online course. Sgt. Laton named a NCWRC Major who is the state boater safety coordinator. He will connect Commissioner Wilson with this person.
- For Paddle Boats (kayaks/paddle boards): Commissioner Wilson said if we start by focusing attention on boater safety, it may have a positive impact on kayakers and paddle boarders.

d. Public Relations

- Website Updates: Commissioner Goff brought up the topic of revising the LWMC's mission statement. She handed out a memo titled "Modification to the Current Mission Statement." Commissioner Goff said that the group's mission statement should answer, "What is the Lake Wylie Marine Commission?" She added that the LWMC's mission statement should be captured in the form of a brief elevator speech. Chairman Brennan distributed out a sheet showing sample mission statements from different organizations. He reviewed it and walked through the LWMC's current mission statement. He added that elevator speeches are usually about 30 seconds long. Commissioner Goff's handout proposed three possible mission statement concepts. Vice Chairman Hegarty moved that the LWMC vote on whether current mission is acceptable or needs a change. Secretary Treasurer Bryant seconded the motion. Discussion: Commissioner Wilson said that mission statements are oftentimes for more internal use and that perhaps Commissioner Goff is suggesting a tagline that explains who we are. Secretary Treasurer Bryant said she likes the shorter version – to keep you safe and try to preserve the river. Commissioner Chacharon said the tagline idea makes sense. The vote taken. Secretary Treasurer Bryant and Commissioners Goff, Wilson, Hanks, and Chacharon voted in favor of changing the current mission statement. Chairman Brennan, Vice Chairman Hegarty, and Commissioner Hartley voted against changing the current mission statement. Commissioner Wilson suggested that each person that voted to change the mission statement come to the April meeting with at least one new idea.

Chairman Brennan added that before the next meeting, each Marine Commissioner should review the 2019 Goals and be ready to provide an update at the April meeting.

Item 11 – Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm.