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**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 Smitty Hanks (Gaston County)  
Commissioner Dan Hartley (Gaston County)  
Commissioner Dan Mullane (Mecklenburg County)

**Commissioners Absent:** Commissioner Hunter Wilson (Mecklenburg County)

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

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***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 July 22, 2019 minutes. Commissioner Hanks moved to approve the July 22, 2019 minutes. Commissioner Goff 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 August 26, 2019 agenda. Vice Chairman Hegarty suggested delaying the Goal Setting Review (Item 9) until the September meeting. Commissioner Goff moved to adopt the August 26, 2019 agenda as amended. Secretary Treasurer Bryant 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 they were called about a near drowning incident the week before. A couple was swimming at the sandbar. The couple got

separated and the man in the couple was found floating face down. A Good Samaritan got the man out of the water and started CPR. They went to hospital and he was revived. Officer Joye will recommend the Good Samaritan for a citizen's recognition award. He noted that the Coast Guard will be on Lake Wylie this weekend. He added that in the off season, there will be days when CMPD will not be on the lake. Vice Chairman Hegarty asked if there is an emergency contact number to reach the park rangers at McDowell Park. He has noticed kids throwing riprap back into the lake – which should be reported.

Gaston County Police Department (GCPD) – Officer Hamrick reported that GCPD's small boat's check engine light keeps coming on. They took it to the marina to have it checked. They will be down a boat this weekend. The good news is that GCPD will extend their lake patrol season out to cover weekends through the end of September.

York County Sheriff's Office (YCSO) – Since last meeting, Sgt. Mabry reported that a gentleman had a medical issue and fell into the lake. They got him out of the lake, started CPR and took him to the hospital. The man died at the hospital. Sgt. Mabry spoke about a map of the York County side of Lake Wylie. He would be happy to try getting a map printed by [York County GIS](#) for the LWMC.

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 will be on Lake Wylie and Lake Norman for Labor Day weekend. Dove hunting season starts on Monday. This past weekend in Charlotte NCWRC offered the first Spanish language boating safety class held at the Latin American Coalition. 12 people participated and everyone passed. There is another Spanish language training class planned for October. Sgt. Laton will send Ms. Parker a link to put on the LWMC website. They need more lifejackets for small children and infants – 4 of each (8 total). Sgt. Laton introduced Officer Springs to the LWMC. He is a NCWRC officer in Gaston County.

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

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

US Coast Guard Auxiliary (USCGA) – Mr. Ray Webber said he has been patrolling on Lake Norman lately. They conducted 235 vessel exams in the Lake Wylie area. The Coast Guard Auxiliary will be on water on September 7 and September 14. The Coast Guard will be on Lake Wylie this weekend.

Mecklenburg County Land Use and Environmental Services Agency (LUESA) – Mr. Matt Phillips reported that some sampling levels from July were high because they sampled after a rainstorm. Areas with high turbidity had to be resampled. They sample summer fecal sites May-September. He said that Mr. Dave Ferguson can send the LWMC the fecal map if need be. Mr. Phillips noted that they will do [bathymetry](#) on Brown's Cove tomorrow. He noted that Long Creek will have new wastewater treatment plant put in. The pipe carrying sewage will need to go either under the water or over the water. He talked about blue green algal blooms. LUESA staff plans to visit and collect samples from 35 public use ponds around Mecklenburg County to check for cyano-bacteria sometimes found in algal blooms. He said that different species of this algae produce different toxins. There is low probability that pond water would get into Lake Wylie.

Duke Energy – Mr. Ronnie Lawson reported that:

- Lake level: 97.3' (target level: 97.0')
- Low inflow protocol: Normal
- No dredge permits have been issued.
- Commissioner Hartley said some locations still have docks in the middle of the lake and have since June. Mr. Lawson said to take a picture and send it to lake services website [lakeservices@duke-energy.com](mailto:lakeservices@duke-energy.com). Several Marine Commissioners mentioned docks and other large debris that needs to be removed.

Gaston County Cove Keeper – No report was given.

Catawba Riverkeeper Foundation (CRF) – Mr. John Searby, the new Catawba Riverkeeper Foundation Executive Director, introduced himself to the LWMC. He noted that cyano-bacteria was found in Lake Wateree last week. This issue needs to be taken seriously. Last Sunday while conducting a Lake Wylie clean up on paddle boards, he saw ~20 rusted 50-gallon drums in cove across from Harbortowne Marina. It was noted that these drums will be added to the Riversweep list. Mr. Searby noted that this is the last week for Swim Guide testing. They are working with Charlotte-Mecklenburg stormwater staff to make sure they are not duplicating efforts. As of last week, they had over 7,000 views of the [Swim Guide map](#).

#### **Item 6 – Update from NCDOT: US 29/74 Bridge Lighting**

Mr. Steven Rackley with NCDOT updated the LWMC, focusing on aesthetics considerations for the US 29/74 bridge. He noted that an engineering firm is working on visualizations, but they are not done yet. Mr. Rackley noted that one of big issues is that they are not sure who will be the lead permitting agency for this project. The aesthetics committee – made up of local government staff and others – is looking at a red brick façade and uplighting. He asked the group about navigational lighting. Commissioner Hanks asked how wide the bridge spans will be. Mr. Rackley said 90' wide each. It was note that there are not other bridges on Lake Wylie with navigational lights. The height at ends of bridge will be 12', it would be higher in the middle, and about the same length as the current bridge, but maybe a little longer. It would have lights on top similar to McAdenville bridge. Commissioner Hanks says it would be nice to have red and green light markers and that if part of span is not going to be navigable, shallow water should be marked. Officer Joye does not recommend white lights because they can be blinding. It was noted that with water rushing through this area, the shallow areas shift around, so shallow water markers can be inaccurate. Commissioner Hanks commented about having red and green channel markers on piers. Commissioner Mullane said if the bridge is well-lit, people may try to fish around there. Mr. Rackley asked if the LWMC would want to see channel marker lighting on the bridge. If LWMC recommends it, NCDOT will put it in the plan and pay for it. Commissioner Hartley expressed concern about boats getting through that part of the river during construction with new piers and old piers in the water at same time. Mr. Rackley commented on when the project would start – possibly the end of 2021 but it could be delayed until 2022. He will pass on visualizations when they are ready.

#### **Item 7 – Discussion about Boat Fire on Lake Wylie**

Chief Carl Faulk, Newport Fire Department (York County) said that the people of Lake Wylie need better safety protection in form of a fire boat. He would like to have a letter of recommendation or endorsement from the LWMC in support of purchasing a fire boat. The fire boat would assist all agencies on Lake Wylie. Right now, he is trying to get approval from different agencies before going to York County Council. Commissioner Goff would like to have the month to review the packet of materials Chief Faulk distributed to the LWMC. Sgt. Mabry said the YCSO is fully behind this idea. Chief Fault said it takes eight months to build a boat. He would like to go to the second York County Council meeting in September to present this

idea. Secretary Treasurer Bryant asked how many times such a boat would be needed on Lake Wylie. Chief Faulk said approximately 10-20 times a year. It would be used to fight fires on land and at marinas. Officer Hamrick added that law enforcement can never have too much safety equipment as this region continues to grow. The question was asked – if the functional use of boat is more rescue and EMT, and fire suppression is second, is there duplication with YCSO boats? Chief Faulk said that the boat will be set up and staffed to fight fires. Letter of rec goes to Chief Faulk. Commissioner Hanks moved to draft letter of support. Vice Chairman Hegarty seconded the motion. Discussion: Chairman Brennan will draft a letter and send to Legal Counsel Clark for review. Legal Counsel Clark will reiew and then send out to the LWMC for approval. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

**Item 8 – Rental Boat Safety Initiatives**

This item was delayed until the September next meeting.

**Item 9 – 2019 Goals Review**

This item was delayed until the September next meeting.

**Item 10 – Riversweep Update**

Commissioner Goff reported that the Riversweep planning committee has 21 registered boat captains. Some sites are in flux. The Seven Oaks bridge site is not available this year. Ebenezer Park may be closed for construction during Riversweep. The Riversweep t-shirts have arrived and the new hats are on the way.

**Item 11 – Water Supply to Lake Wylie Residents**

Vice Chairman Hegarty noticed a lot of digging and pipe being laid. He will check with Blue Granite to see what they are doing and how it is impacting Lake Wylie.

**Item 12 – Treasurer’s Report**

Secretary Treasurer Bryant reported that invoices have been sent to the three contributing counties for Q1 and Q2.

**Item 13 – Chairman’s Report**

Chairman Brennan reported the following:

Northern Law Center: The Belmont Rowing Club (BRC) has been recently determined that they may have to extend their dock into the channel farther so their dock will not have to rest on the bottom in the event of low lake levels. They have also been directed by Duke Energy to provide a landscape plan shoeing the plantings they will provide in way of and in addition to whatever shoreline stabilization they will put in place. No shoreline stabilization is needed in way of the government boat house dock. The BRC anticipates these changes will likely further delay until mid-September the application to the City of Belmont. The City will then submit the application to FERC.

Meetings: Chairman Brennan met with Catawba Riverkeeper Foundation (CRF) Executive Director John Searby, Commissioner Goff, and Riversweep Planning Committee member Landon Albrick to discuss further integration of CRF into Riversweep. He scheduled the annual reports to York County Council (Sept 3) and Gaston County Commission (Sept 10)

Riversweep: Gained additional Boat Captain and site prizes from local businesses.

#### **Item 14 – Clerk’s Report**

Ms. Parker read an email she recently received from Mr. Brian Houston with LaBella Associates related to Gastonia’s Southeast Sewer Project: *In accordance with the request included in the LWMC approval letter dated 6/27/17, I am writing to notify the Commission that the City has decided to pursue construction of BOTH the phase one and phase two pipes crossing the South Fork River at Armstrong Ford Road. The City is anticipating a September 1, 2019 advertisement date for construction bids, accepting bids on or after October 1, 2019, and construction to be completed by the deadline imposed in the FERC Project Crossing Agreement with Duke Energy, which is November 24, 2020.* Ms. Parker asked the LWMC if they have any questions for LaBella. Commissioner Hanks had a question about putting pipe underground and if pipe would be below the dam. Ms. Parker will send the LWMC what Mr. Houston sent back in 2017. Chairman Brennan asked Commissioner Hanks to make a recommendation at the next meeting.

#### **Item 15 – Old/New Business and Commission Project Reports**

- a. Water Quality:
  - Clean Marina/Clean Boating: Commissioner Mullane reported that he is scheduled to visit marinas with Steve Denton starting at Tega Cay on September 14.
  - Sedimentation: Commissioner Goff reported that part of Bonum Road is closed because a culvert is being replaced. She reported that truckloads of sediment and debris are being hauled out. There are no dredge permits in place.
  - Shoreline Plantings: Commissioner Mullane had nothing further to report.
  - PCBs and Heavy Metals in Fish: Commissioner Hanks had nothing to report.
- b. Buoy Maintenance: Commissioner Hanks updated the group on buoys and Sgt. Laton said he would help Commissioner Hanks make the connection with Betsy Haywood, NCWRC No Wake Zone Coordinator.
- c. Safety Programs:
  - For Boat Rental Companies: Commissioner Wilson was not present to report.
  - For Paddle Boats (kayaks/paddle boards): Commissioner Wilson was not present to report.
- d. Public Relations:
  - Commissioner Goff noted that LWMC has committed to having a booth at Riverfest 19 which is on Saturday, September 28 in Loftin Park. There will be music, food trucks, and a silent auction. She would like for Marine Commissioners to sign up to staff the booth for an hour or so between 1 pm - 6 pm. We will have internet connection at the booth, so people can register people for Riversweep. Commissioner Goff presented an additional booth opportunity at Academy Sports in Gastonia on Labor Day weekend. The group decided to forgo participating in the Academy Sports event due to timing around Labor Day weekend.
  - Commissioner Goff said the LWMC is almost out of inventory of brochures and ‘who to call’ cards. Chairman Brennan asked each Marine Commissioner to review these materials and email any changes to Commissioner Goff.

Vice Chairman Hegarty asked Secretary Treasurer Bryant to review and approve Riversweep invoices for t-shirt and caps. She approved the invoices.

#### **Item 16 – Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:32 pm.