



Commissioners Present: Chairman Peter Hegarty (Mecklenburg County)
Vice Chairman Dan Hartley (Gaston County)
Secretary Treasurer Dan Mullane (Mecklenburg County)
Commissioner Blanche Bryant (York County)
Commissioner Debi Chacharon (York County)
Commissioner Ray Webber (York County)
Commissioner Smitty Hanks (Gaston County)
Commissioner Brad Thomas (Gaston County)
Commissioner Hunter Wilson (Mecklenburg County)

Commissioners Absent: ---

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 & Introduction of New Marine Commissioners

Chairman Hegarty called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and welcomed everyone present. Chairman Hegarty introduced new Marine Commissioners Brad Thomas (Gaston County) and Ray Webber (York County). Commissioners Thomas and Webber introduced themselves to the group and stakeholders.

Item 2 – Approval of Minutes

Chairman Hegarty asked if any changes need to be made to the September 23, 2019 minutes. Vice Chairman Hartley moved to approve the September 23, 2019 minutes. Commissioner Hanks seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

Item 3 – Approval of Agenda

Chairman Hegarty asked if any changes need to be made to the October 28, 2019 agenda. Commissioner Chacharon moved to adopt the October 28, 2019 agenda. Commissioner Bryant seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

Item 4 – Public Comment

Hunter Wilson introduced a new project he is working on – www.VisitLakeWylie.com. He said the website is not a new concept, in that it is similar to www.VisitLakeNorman.org which is a robust website for that non-profit organization. Mr. Wilson commented that there is not a similar such platform in place

to market Lake Wylie. The mission of VisitLakeWylie.com is to market the lake and the surrounding area as one larger community. He said if anyone has questions, to please speak with him after the meeting.

Item 5 – Stakeholder Reports

Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department (CMPD) – Officer Joye reported that both CMPD boats are operational. CMPD has two officers working the lake, with a third officer on the way. The third person will be the first female CMPD officer on Lake Wylie. He reported that they are going to have a process to hire a fourth full time officer.

Gaston County Police Department (GCPD) – Sgt. Knupp reported that GCPD is off the lake for the season.

York County Sheriff's Office (YCSO) – Sgt. Mabry reported that YCSO is down to one boat. Their big boat has mechanic issues that started after a water rescue call. When new 911 communicators are hired for York County, Sgt Mabry gives them an orientation tour of Lake Wylie. He reported that one of those communicators recently received the call from boaters in need of rescue. The communicator was able to tell Sgt. Mabry where the stranded boaters were located. As of November 4, Ebenezer Park landing will be closed. Sgt. Mabry has three boater safety classes scheduled for the spring. YCSO will have dive training tomorrow.

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 duck and goose season starts on November 16. He told the Marine Commissioners to let him know if they hear gun shots or see people in camouflage on boats. NCWRC plans to set new dates for Spanish language boater training in the first quarter of 2020. Sgt. Laton will send Ms. Parker Spanish language boater safety literature and she will pass it on to Commissioner Wilson who will post it to the LWMC website.

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

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

US Coast Guard Auxiliary (USCGA) – Commissioner Webber reported that the USCGA are off the water for the season and they have not yet received an on the water extension. They have been asked to be part of the Parade of Lights in December.

Mecklenburg County Land Use and Environmental Services Agency (LUESA) – Chairman Hegarty said that Mr. Dave Ferguson could not attend the meeting, but everyone has a copy of the LUESA water quality report.

Duke Energy – Mr. Ronnie Lawson reported that:

- Lake level: 96.4' (target level: 97.0')
- Low inflow protocol: Normal
- No dredge permits have been issued.

Gaston County Cove Keeper – No report was given.

Catawba Riverkeeper Foundation (CRF) – Executive Director John Searby reported for Riverkeeper Brandon Jones. Mr. Searby commented that he is appreciative of the work done by LWMC on Riversweep and the Sedimentation Symposium. The CRF received final Swim Guide numbers. This summer they took sample from eight sites from Memorial Day to Labor Day, and had over 7,500 views on the Swim Guide website. Next year they are planning to extend the Swim Guide program to all reservoirs throughout the basin. They will request support again from the LWMC for site sponsorship. It will cost \$500 to sponsor a site. The CRF will send Swim Guide information so the LWMC can consider sponsorship. Mr. Searby noted that their boat is about to turn 20 years old. They are starting to look for a replacement boat. He asked that everyone keep the CRF in mind if they hear of a boat for sale. The boat needs to be suitable for sampling. The CRF is working on a shoreline fishing initiative. They will call it Fish Guide. The program will focus on litter control at shoreline fishing areas. He noted that they recently removed 65 bags of trash from the Armstrong Bridge area. It was the largest collection of trash collected and removed from a small area that he had ever seen. Commissioner Wilson asked about the trash that collects on Goat Island and if the CRF has any ideas to solve that issue. Mr. Searby said they are working with local government to put trash receptacles in place. Chairman Hegarty commented that construction of trash receptacles would be a great Eagle Scout project.

Item 6 – Hydrilla Sampling Update

Dr. Brett Hartis with Duke Energy reported that his team have been busy monitoring hydrilla and other invasive vegetation in the lake. He distributed a handout – 2019 Aquatic Plant Survey – to each of the Marine Commissioners and proceeded to review it with the group. He talked about alligator weed and creeping water primrose, noting that the worst thing you can do is try to have these plants treated. Treatment tells the plant it is under attack and it will take root where it is. The object is to get the plant out before it takes root. Dr. Hartis said in North Carolina you can hire someone to remove these plants, but in South Carolina, you have to go through the state. These plants like to grow in 4-5 feet of water and will die off in wintertime. He said that Lookout Shoals had ~100 acres of the parrot feather plant. He noted that an isolated patch of hydrilla was found on Lake Wylie near the US National Whitewater Center. His team will address the hydrilla and parrot feather first thing next growing season. Dr. Hartis talked about the lyngbya plant and that two samples were found at different parts of Lake Wylie. He noted that it is a very difficult species to control – fish will not eat it and herbicides will not kill it. This plant can survive five years dried and out of the water. He commented that it is showing up in reservoirs in the southeast and that there is no real answer for how to take care of it. Lyngbya can produce taste and odor issues too. Chairman Hegarty asked about carp stocking and whether it is effective. Dr. Hartis said it is, but Lake Wylie does not need carp. He added that active surveying of vegetation is the best way to move forward.

Item 7 – Northern Law Center Boat House Summary

Chairman Hegarty reviewed the boat house summary former LWMC Chairman Brennan provided before stepping down from his position. The next step is to receive a memorandum of understanding (MOU) from Gaston County and the City of Belmont. Until that time, the LWMC cannot do anything further. Chairman Hegarty appointed Vice Chairman Hartley and Commissioner Thomas to oversee the Northern Law Center process.

Item 8 – Riversweep 2019 Review

Commissioner Chacharon reported that Riversweep 2019 was a very successful event. The 750 volunteers did an amazing job of removing 1,200 bags of trash, two refrigerators, two docks, and a dock roof – totaling approximately 22,000 pounds of trash.

Item 9 – Sedimentation Symposium Discussion

Secretary Treasurer Mullane reported that organizing this symposium has been a group effort. The idea for the symposium is to assemble a panel of people from each of the three counties that are familiar with sedimentation issues on Lake Wylie. Secretary Treasurer Mullane reviewed that proposed agenda and symposium objectives. A primary goal around sedimentation is to bring all three counties to the same level of monitoring and penalty. The panelists were named, and it was noted that the Catawba Riverkeeper Foundation is managing the invitation list. Secretary Treasurer Mullane suggested that the LWMC commit funding for this event. It was noted that Jersey Mike's would cater as they offered the best price. Commissioner Wilson asked about the audience for the symposium and Secretary Treasurer Mullane said that the audience is local government staff and elected officials, and state agency staff. Secretary Treasurer Mullane moved to keep \$400.00 in reserves to use for the 2019 Sedimentation Symposium. Commissioner Chacharon seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The vote was taken and approved unanimously.

Commissioner Bryant moved to donate \$100.00 to the River Hills Rescue Squad with a thank you note. Vice Chairman Hartley seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The vote was taken and approved unanimously.

Item 10 – Treasurer's Report

Secretary Treasurer Mullane reported that for the current fiscal year, \$25,000 has been requested from the three contributing counties: Gaston, Mecklenburg, and York. For Q1 (July-September) and Q2 (October-December) funds have been requested and received from all three counties. The total amount received thus far is \$37,500. The next round of invoices will be sent to each county in January 2020.

Item 11 – Chairman's Report

Chairman Hegarty did not have a report.

Item 12 – Clerk's Report

Ms. Parker presented the draft proposed 2020 LWMC meeting schedule. Commissioner Thomas moved to approve the 2020 meeting schedule. Commissioner Webber seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The vote was taken and approved unanimously.

Item 13 – Old/New Business and Commission Project Reports

a. Water Quality:

- Clean Marina/Clean Boating: Secretary Treasurer Mullane did not have a report.
- Shoreline Plantings/Invasive Species: Commissioner Hanks did not have a report.

b. Buoys & Buoy Maintenance:

- Status of No Wake Buoys: Commissioner Hanks reported that LWMC buoys are in reasonable shape and that all bridges are marked except for the I-85 bridge. He has a proposal from a possible contractor to handle buoy installation and will evaluate that proposal before the next LWMC meeting. There was discussion about buoy placement and Vice Chairman Hartley commented on the need for a better buoy tracking process.
- New Contractor Discussion: Chairman Hegarty asked Commissioner Thomas to join Commissioner Hanks in evaluating the buoy maintenance proposal. Questions came up about whether the LWMC needs to receive three bids from possible contractors and what if three bids do not come in. Legal Counsel Clark will look into it. Commissioner Thomas asked if Mr. Terry Everhart is still maintaining the buoys. The answer is yes. Commissioner Hanks brought the new Marine Commissioners up to speed on what has happened with the buoys

over the past few months. Commissioner Thomas asked if Mr. Everhart still wants to do the work. Commissioner Hanks thinks he does. Commissioner Wilson said he thinks that whomever takes on buoy maintenance needs to be proactive and should have the capability to monitor them on a regular basis. Commissioner Hanks agrees, but noted that buoy repositioning, etc. will require Marine Commission approval. It cannot be the buoy contractor's decision about where to move buoys.

c. Safety Programs:

- For Boat Rental Companies: Commissioners Wilson said there should not be much rental boat activity on Lake Wylie for the next few months. Chairman Hegarty would like Commissioner Webber to partner with Commissioner Wilson on looking at safety matters. Commissioner Wilson suggested that Commissioner Webber take over the Safety Committee since he is taking over the Public Relations Committee. Chairman Hegarty asked Commissioner Webber and Wilson to discuss these roles and report back at the November 25 meeting.
- For Paddle Boats (kayaks/paddle boards): Commissioners Wilson and Webber had nothing further to report.

d. Public Relations: Commissioner Wilson reported on taking three Mecklenburg County Commissioners out on a tour of Lake Wylie. The County Commissioners had consistent questions for the full 2.5 hours they were on the tour. There was discussion about setting up a tour for Gaston and York County Commissioners as well, but on bigger boat. Chairman Hegarty said that was a great event. It was noted that Mecklenburg County Commissioners appreciated the opportunity.

Chairman Hegarty asked Commissioner Wilson to take over as Chair of the Public Relations Committee. Commissioner Wilson said he has been able to log into LWMC website and it is easy to update and maintain. Ms. Parker will start to send Commissioner Wilson LWMC agendas and minutes to post. Commissioner Wilson said he has added himself to be copied (in addition to Ms. Parker) on [emails that are sent through the LWMC website](#).

Commissioner Hanks gave a report on the GIS workshop he attended that was put on by Catawba Wateree Conservation group. A company called RTI has developed a software package that analyzes data and predicts areas that are prone to sedimentation problems that feed into a lake system. The Catawba Wateree group contracted with RTI to identify parcels that would be most advantageous for purchase or to be put under protection against sedimentation. He learned that Lake Wylie has the largest watershed of any impoundment on the Catawba River chain. That means there is a larger area gathering water and sending it into the Catawba River. RTI has identified 'hot spots' that are sensitive to development that should be developed in a smart way, in terms of the ratio of developed space to green space. Commissioner Hanks said there is a lot of valuable information that is available to the LWMC through Mecklenburg County.

Item 14 – Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 pm.