

**Lake Wylie Marine Commission**  
**September 25, 2023 Meeting**  
**CityWorks Center – Gaston County**



**Commissioners Present:** Chairman Hunter Wilson (Mecklenburg County)  
Vice Chairman Ray Webber (York County)  
Secretary Treasurer A.W. Bill Beers (York County)  
Commissioner Smitty Hanks (York County)  
Commissioner Brad Thomas (Gaston County)  
Commissioner Dan Hartley (Gaston County)  
Commissioner Dan Mullane (Mecklenburg County)

**Commissioners Absent:** Quay Williford; Commissioner, Sam Perkins; Commissioner

**Staff Absent:** Neil Brennan, Executive Director

**Staff Present:** Chris Clark, Legal Counsel, Alice Flowers, Administrative Assistant

**Meeting Minutes**

**Item 1 – Welcome**

Chairman Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

**Item 2 – Approval of Minutes**

Vice Chairman Webber motioned to amend and adopt the minutes to reflect that Commissioners Smitty Hanks and Dan Mullane were present at the August 28 meeting. The motion was seconded by Secretary Treasurer Beers. The motion carried.

**Item 3 – Approval of Agenda**

The agenda was approved as presented.

**Item 4 – Public Comment**

Mr. Blake Bowerstock shared that he moved to Lake Wylie (on Gaither Rd) about four years ago and is concerned about the water level. Mr. Bowerstock mentioned there is 40 ft tall invasive vegetation growing behind his house and a small peninsula about 40 feet wide. He feels that the more the water level is kept low, the more problems will persist that could cause irreparable damage.

Mr. Ray Williams representing the America’s Boating Club (US Power Squadron of the Catawba) and the Charlotte Boating group hosted about two hundred disadvantaged children and their families at Camp Thunderbird for a day of fun. A parent expressed her gratitude to the boat club for giving her children a chance to forget their current living situation. The America’s Boating Club Catawba and the Charlotte group have sponsored the event for the past sixty years twice a year at the Red Fez in May and at Camp Thunderbird in September.

There is a shortage of volunteers for the Riversweep and he encouraged everyone to consider volunteering.

**Item 5 - Stakeholders**

**Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department (CMPD)** – Officer Joy reported that Labor Day was busy for their team. They are having manpower issues but hope to be back on track spring of next year.

**Gaston County Police Department (GCPD)** – Sergeant Knupp reported that the GCPD boats are off the water for deep cleaning. They have also replaced a 2003 vehicle with a newer version that is being outfitted and should be in operation by next season. Sonar has been installed on each boat and they are ready to go.

Emergency response time might be limited, but they anticipate it will improve once they can get the boats back on the water.

York County Sheriff's Office (YCSO) – No report was given.

Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office – No report was given.

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

Chairman Wilson recognized that the Tega Cay Fire Department was in attendance and will be added as a stakeholder to attend future meetings. Fire Chief Glyn Hasty introduced himself and announced that they will be adding their boat to the water, and he is looking forward to attending future LWMC meetings as a stakeholder.

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

NC Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) – No report was given.

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

US Coast Guard-Sector NC – No report was given.

US Coast Guard Auxiliary (USCGA) – No report was given.

**Mecklenburg County Land Use Environmental Service (MCLUES)** – Mr. Dave Ferguson provided a two-sided handout with the Lake Wylie August 2023 Routine Sampling Sites and the Summer Special Bacteria Sites information. He also reported that Whitewater Center is expected to open a new 70-acre dog park this fall. The MCLUES will be monitoring and inspecting the area to ensure that it is environmentally safe for dogs as well as the residents.

**Steele Creek Fire Department (SCFD)** – The boat is now out of the water and is being stored at Joyner's Marina near Buster Boyd's bridge. Along with Charlotte Fire Department they were dispatched to rescue a boat that was taking on water, otherwise, there are no major incidents to report.

**Duke Energy** – Mr. John Bradley reported that the current lake level is 96.4 and there was one dredge approved last month near the South Port area.

**Catawba Riverkeeper** – Ms. Ambar Torres Molinari reported that as of September the following were presented:

**Swim Guide Report:**

- Only 3 total fails in the entire summer season
  - 2 on Sadler Island Sandbar
  - 1 on South Point Beach
  
- Website visits for Lake Wylie locations: 10,245 total
  - Most visited: Ebenezer Park (1,900 website visits)
  - Second most visited: Little Allison Sandbar (1,200 website visits)
  
- Social media visits (includes all sites): ~150,000

Riversweep Event: October 7, 9AM -12PM. Allison Creek was taken out of the list due to closure on October 7.

Request from Catawba Riverkeeper to LWMC: To send out an email to ask for more boat captains.

- Riverside Marina
- Gaston Wildlife Club

- Buster Boyd
- Nivens Creek Landing
- Tega Cay Marina

Emails are being sent with information regarding supply pick up and drop off.

**TowBoatUS** – Mr. Logan Thomas reported that they had 56 calls for assistance on Lake Wylie; 54 of the calls were routine tows, two of them were salvages, and one was taking on water near Buster Boyd’s. SPLASH made an appearance at Camp Thunderbird for the children’s event on September 22. It is scheduled to appear at Catawba Fest on October 14.

**Item 6 - B-6051 Bridge Replacement in Belmont - Request for Comments from LWMC** – Mr. John Williams, a Project Manager for Rummel, Klepper and Kahl, LLP, presented a letter requesting comments related to the NCDOT bridge replacement project (B-6051) over the Catawba River, Lake Wylie, a facility managed by Duke Energy with a FERC license. Included in the same attachment was a related information package. This is likely a three-year project with an estimated beginning time in July 2024.

LWMC voiced their concerns that the construction makes sure there is clearance for any water emergencies to be able to get through. LWMC will discuss and get a letter to them with their comments.

**Item 7 – CMPD Boat Dock Drawings (McDowell Park Boathouse Replacement)**. Mr. Bill Ashlin, Vice President of ALR Architecture, briefed the LWMC on plans to replace the CMPD boat house at McDowell Park. It will replace the old boat dock that is currently on the south side of the peninsula of McDowell Park. Mr. Ashlin has been in contact with Mr. John Bradley of Duke Lake Services and would also like LWMC to review and give their input. The plans have been submitted to Duke Energy.

**Item 8 – Buoys and Buoy Maintenance Update:** Commissioner Hanks reported that the buoy stock is in good shape. Mr. Logan Thomas will contact Alice Flowers when it is time to order again.

**Item 9 – Buoy Tracking Follow-Up:** No report given.

**Item 10 - Clean Marina Program Update** – Secretary Treasurer Beers gave a report that the Clean Marina Program is coming up soon. Commissioner Quay Williford will be taking over the program.

**Item 11– Treasurer’s Report**

Secretary Treasurer Beers gave an update on the year-to-date Treasurer’s Report for the current fiscal year. The financial reports are included in the agenda packet.

**As of 8/31/2023**

<b>Revenue</b>	
Dues	\$46,750.00
Interest	\$ 148.59
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$46,898.59</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	\$10,833.67
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>\$33,064.92</b>

Secretary Treasurer Beers has made the decision to bid farewell to the LWMC and will not continue to serve on the Lake Wylie Marine Commission for another term. He thanked his fellow Commissioners for their support in their efforts to bring the regulations concerning boating safety to South Carolina.

**Item 12 – Executive Director’s Report – September 2023 Report**

Chairman Wilson report on behalf of Executive Director Neil Brennan:

**Briefs**

Provided the annual report to the Gaston County Commission on September 12; the Mecklenburg County Commission report is scheduled for October 3. Briefed the new Gaston County Chief of Police Stepan Zill on the LWMC including the boat house, the enacted idle speed regulations, the proposed charter boat, and vessel rental regulation. Briefed Mecklenburg County Commission Vice Chair Elanie Powell on the proposed Charter Boat and Vessel Rental regulation. Briefed new Belmont City Manager Miles Braswell on the LWMC including hydrilla control, boat house for the fire boat, and erosion control.

**Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Application**

Awaiting U.S. Corps of Army Engineers review of the pre-construction notification. The application then goes to Duke Energy and then to FERC.

**Riversweep**

Arranged for pick-up of:

- gloves from the Catawba Nuclear Station
- bottled water from the Allen Steam Plant
- trash grabbers from Lowe’s Belmont

Posted the LWMC funded banners at 4 locations in Belmont (2), Mt Holly, and Lake Wylie.

**Regulations**

Discussed the draft of the Charter Boat and Vessel Rental Regulation with the Lake Norman Marine Commission leaders.

**Paw Creek No-Wake Zone Request (NWZ)**

Received an application for a NWZ at the same location in Paw Creek as the one we received in 2021. That application was denied by the NCWRC. I contacted the applicant and explained why the LWMC would not approve his application and sent him a copy of the NCWRC inspector’s report that outlined the reason for the disapproval.

**Miscellaneous**

Responded to citizens’ inquiries regarding the rules and procedures for establishing a No-Wake Zone. Drafted the September Newsletter.

**Item 13 – Administrator’s Report:** No report was given.

**Item 14 – Public Relations:** All of Chairman Wilson’s responsibilities have been offboarded to Commissioner Perkins.

**Item 15 – Announcements:** The LWMC has invited County Commissioners from Mecklenburg and Gaston counties on a boat tour on Lake Wylie on September 25 at 3pm.

Chairman Wilson also acknowledge that Commissioner Elaine Powell was in attendance.

**Item 16 – Election of Officers**

Legal Counsel Clark put forth the LWMC Nominating Committee recommended nominees:

- Vice Chairman Ray Webber was nominated for the office of Chairman. Mr. Clark opened the floor for other nominations. Hearing none other, Ray Webber was elected as Chairman of the LWMC.
- Commissioner Brad Thomas was nominated for the office of Vice Chairman. Mr. Clark opened the floor for other nominations. Hearing none other, Brad Thomas was elected as Vice Chairman of the LWMC.
- Commissioner Sam Perkins was nominated for the office of Secretary-Treasurer. Mr. Clark opened the floor for any other nominations. Hearing none other, Sam Perkins was elected as Secretary-Treasurer. This Concludes the officer nominations.

On behalf of the Lake Wylie Marine Commission, Vice Chairman Webber bid farewell to the Commissioners whose term will end September 30 and presented each of them with a plaque in recognition of their service.

**Item 17 – Adjournment at 8:39 PM.**