

**Lake Wylie Marine Commission**  
**October 23, 2023, LWMC Meeting**  
**Red Fez– Mecklenburg County**



- Commissioners Present:** Chairman Ray Webber (York County)  
Vice Chairman Brad Thomas (Gaston County)  
Secretary Treasurer Sam Perkins (Mecklenburg County)  
Commissioner David Stoner (Mecklenburg County)  
Commissioner Brian Yarmon (Mecklenburg County)  
Commissioner Dan Hartley (Gaston County)  
Commissioner Jerry Smith (Gaston County)  
Commissioner Quay Williford (York County)  
Commissioner Ray Williams (York County)
- Staff Present:** Neil Brennan, Executive Director; Chris Clark, Legal Counsel  
Alice Flowers, Administrative Assistant

**Meeting Minutes**

**Item 1 – Welcome**

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

**Item 2 – Approval of Minutes**

Vice Chairman Thomas motioned to amend and adopt the minutes to reflect the deletion of “Sent copies of the draft to law enforcement leaders for comment.” sentence under Regulations in the Executive Director’s September Report. Commissioner Hartley seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**Item 3 – Approval of Agenda**

Chairman Webber entertained a motion to amend the agenda to include a discussion on invasive species by Mr. Brett Hartis be added at the end of the Duke Energy presentation. Commissioner Hartley motioned to amend and adopt the agenda as amended. Vice Chairman Thomas seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**Item 4 – Public Comment**

Mrs. Nancy Smith with the Catawba Yacht Club announced that on Saturday and Sunday (November 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>), the Yacht Club will be sponsoring the Jim Cook Memorial Sailing Regatta. Mrs. Smith wishes to inform everyone that there will be more sail boats on the lake due to the big race.

**Item 5 - Stakeholders**

**Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department (CMPD)** – Officers Joye and Reitano are working special duty and not present at the meeting. The representative gave an update on their behalf. Staffing is down as one officer has been reassigned to a different position, one officer has resigned. Until further notice, Officers Reitano and Joye will be available for calls and will be monitoring the lake as needed.

**Gaston County Police Department (GCPD)** – No report was given.

**York County Sheriff’s Office (YCSO)** – A collision occurred on the southern part of the lake on October 6, involving a high-speed boat and a leisurely pontoon boat. Although both vessels suffered some damage, fortunately, there were no human injuries reported. The operator of the high-speed boat was issued a citation for his negligent conduct.

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

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

**Tega Cay Fire Department (TCFD)** - No report was given.

**Mecklenburg County ABC Board Law Enforcement (MCABCBLW)** – No report was given.

**NC Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC)** –Duck Season started October 19 – 21, in case you heard hunters in the vicinity. It will start up again November 4 through the end of the month.

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

**US Coast Guard-Sector NC (USCGSNC)** – No report was given.

**US Coast Guard Auxiliary (USCGA)** – According to Ms. Lisa Spencer, there has been a 36% increase in vessel examinations compared to the previous year, reaching a total of 300 (compared to 191 last year). Additionally, Program Visitations have increased by 18% from last year, with a total of 279 visits (compared to 229 last year). Ms. Spencer provided clarification on Program Visitations, explaining that this involves the USCGA approaching various boating rental companies on the docks to provide them with safety information to pass on to their customers/patrons.

**Mecklenburg County Land Use Environmental Service (MCLUES)** – Although Mr. Dave Ferguson was absent, he was able to deliver the Lake Wylie Quality Report for September 2023 to Executive Director Brennan, who distributed it to the Commissioners.

**Steele Creek Fire Department (SCFD)** – Regarding the Radio Tower near Red Fez, the SCFD has obtained temporary equipment for that tower and are awaiting the arrival of the permanent equipment that has been ordered. No injuries were reported as of October 23.

**Duke Energy** – Mr. John Bradley brought to the attention of the Commissioners the current low level of the Lake, measuring at 95.6 ft, which is below the normal level of 97 ft. Additionally, he reminded them that there has been approval for one dredge in the Southfork area since the last meeting. Additional questions were asked for clarifications on protocol, etc. Vice Chairman asked Alice Flowers to provide a summary of questions from the Commissioners to Mr. Bradley. Mr. Bradley will get back to the Commissioner with the answers.

#### **Added to the Agenda**

Dr. Brett Hartis of SOLitude Lake Management – Dr. Brett Hartis was added to the agenda to discuss invasive species on the lake. Dr. Hartis mentioned that the Hydrilla issue is isolated and under control. According to Dr. Hartis, they did treatments with a contract in the Kevin Loftin Park area, about 9.5 acres of Hydrilla treatment. They are in the process of On-Year surveying of the Catawba Wateree; end to end and will have a report November or the first quarter of next year.

A recent issue has been observed in the form of Lyngbya or blue-green algae, a bacterial sign. Its growth on Lake Wateree has become a challenge to control. One of the most noticeable issues is the taste and odor compounds of water treatment facilities. The State of North Carolina has a cost-sharing program among several water management groups for the treatment of Hydrilla and other invasive plant species. Unfortunately, Lyngbya is not on that list, so they do not allocate any funding for the management of this invasive species. There is a movement to try and add it to the list under invasive aquatic weed. Lake Wylie has a small population on the lake's east side. Executive Director Brennan and Dr. Hartis recently met with a company to discuss management options. Dr. Hartis will include the management options in a forthcoming report in the late first quarter or early second quarter.

Dr. Hartis also brought to the attention of the Commissioners the presence of a rapidly growing eelgrass species, potentially resulting from a crossbreeding between African and Asia eelgrasses. Although Lake Wylie is not currently affected by this species, it is important to take note that it is an issue for Lake Norman.

**Catawba Riverkeeper** – Mr. John Searby reported that they had a successful Riversweep October 7th, which was the 20<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of the Lake Wylie Riversweep. They have not expanded this year to include the entire river basin; 53 sites, 1200 volunteers, and removed more than 47,000 pounds of trash from the river. The number site was Tailrace Marina with 7200 pounds of trash removal. Mr. Searby thanks LWMC for the in workforce and financial support.

Mr. Searby also reported that they are working closely with Crescent on the River District project. The Catawba Riverkeeper has begun a sampling and monitoring program at five sample sites that they are testing as they go through the construction process.

**TowBoatUS** – Mr. Logan Thomas reported that they responded to 44 tows on Lake Wylie. They are winding down for the season and had some grounded of the boats with the water level being so low. They are relocating their boats; one of them is at the Marine Max, and the others are at Pier 49.

**New Commissioners** – Chairman Webber introduced the new Commissioners to the public.

Gaston County:

- Commissioner Jerry Smith

Mecklenburg County:

- Commissioner David Stoner
- Commissioner Brain Yarmon

York County

- Commissioner Ray Williams was not seated as he has not yet been sworn in by the York County Commission. We expect he will be seated as a LWMC Commissioner at the November meeting.

#### **Item 6 – South Carolina New Boater Education Requirements**

Mr. Randell Smith is the founder and Chairman of the Boating Safety South Carolina. He presented a PowerPoint presentation on the South Carolina 2023 new Boating Law that went into effect August 2023. The presentation can be found on [www.Dnr.org](http://www.Dnr.org).

**Item 7 – Buoys and Buoy Maintenance Update:** Mr. Logan Thomas reported that the buoy inventory is in good condition.

**Item 8 – Buoy Tracking Follow-Up:** No update at this point.

**Item 9– Treasurer’s Report:** No report currently as the new Secretary Treasure Perkins is in contact with former Secretary Treasure Beers to be brought up to speed. Please refer to the agenda packet for the most current financial reports.

#### **Item 10 – Executive Director’s Report – October 2023**

##### **Invasive species**

Met by Zoom with Shaun Hyde Director, Aquatics Division, SePRO Corporation and Dr. Brett Hartis and Eryn Molloy of Duke to discuss invasive species in Lake Wylie. Hydrilla is controllable; alligator weed can be attacked chemically by licensed and experienced technicians in addition to mechanically removing it. SePRO is to provide a list of local technicians whom residents whose docks are impacted by alligator weed can contact. A new strain of lyngbya, a genus of cyanobacteria, has developed in the cove on the north side of the Rte. 74; it is more widespread in Lake Norman and in Mountain Island Lake and is being combatted chemically on Gaston

Lake. As indicated above, neither alligator weed nor lyngbya is recognized by the states as an invasive species that qualifies for shared funding as is the case for hydrilla. Chemical applications to combat lyngbya start in April and run through the summer. Dr. Hartis and I agreed to meet over the winter to map a course of action to address the issue.

**Briefs**

On September 27, hosted with then Chairman Wilson, Vice Chairman Webber, and newly appointed Commissioner Yarmon a boat tour for Mecklenburg County Commissioners Elaine Powell, Susan Rodriguez-McDowell, and Laura Meier. Provided the annual report to the Mecklenburg County Board of County Commissioners on October 3.

Summary: The briefs to the three counties were well received and the commissions expressed their appreciation for the work of the LWMC.

**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 and then to FERC.

**Riversweep Numbers**

Trash

<b>BASIN</b>	<b># TIRES</b>	<b>TOTAL WEIGHT</b>
Lake James	4	310.00
Lake Rhodhiss	0	495.12
Lake Hickory	3	1,306.00
<b>Total Northern Basin</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2,111.12</b>
Lake Norman	6	4,283.50
Mountain Island	0	1,854.28
Charlotte Creeks	8	1,836.68
Lake Wylie	50	17,346.98
<b>Total Central Basin</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>25,321.44</b>
<b>South Fork Basin</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>4,571.54</b>
Catawba Below	114	7,952.45
Fishing Creek	7	3,984.00
Great Falls	4	1,395.00
Lake Wateree	5	1,641.00
<b>Total Southern Basin</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>14,972.45</b>
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>46,976.55</b>

**Volunteers**

Total – 1,200 Lake Wylie – 378

The number of volunteers this year was much lower than in past years.

**Regulations**

Continued the dialogue with the Lake Norman Marine Commission chairman of the rental boat committee regarding pre-ride checklists for the vessel rental regulations. After consulting with Counselor Clark and Chairman Webber, edited the draft Lake Wylie Marine Commission Charter Boat and Vessel Rental Regulation

and forwarded it along with a pre-ride checklist to the LWMC Commissioners for consideration. Further revisions to the draft will be made pending input from the Commissioners.

### **No-Wake Zones (NWZ)**

Edited our NWZ policy to reflect the ability of South Carolina residents to petition the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources directly for a NWZ even though the SC DNR prefers applications come through the LWMC.

Revisited the Paw Creek area where a resident had requested a NWZ to confirm that the condition for the 2021 disapproval had not changed; they had not. Communicated to the resident that NWZ might be reconsidered in the future only if conditions change.

### **Miscellaneous**

With Chairman Webber, welcomed and briefed the newly appointed commissioners from the three counties:  
David Stoner and Brian Yarmon – Mecklenburg County  
Ray Williams – York County  
Jerry Smith – Gaston County

### **Item 11 - B-6051 Boater Safety Plan Meeting with WRC**

Chairman Webber brought up the B-6051 Boater Safety Plan to get feedback from the Commissioners regarding the email about the NCDOT contractor adjusting the detour passage, the no wake zone buoys, and the floating barricade. There were questions and concerns therefore, Chairman Webber will get back to the Commissioners with more information.

**Item 12 – Administrator’s Report:** Ms. Alice Flowers will create a spreadsheet to include the multiple Action Items that were discussed at the meeting. The list will be provided to Chairman Webber.

**Item 13 –** Chairman Webber would like for the Commissioners to take a section of the website, review it monthly, and send revisions/edits/photos to Secretary Treasurer Perkins, with a copy to Chairman Webber and Executive Director Brennan.

**Item 14 – Announcements:** There were no announcements.

**Item 15 –** The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.