



Lake Norman Marine Commission

Regular Meeting Minutes – March 19, 2026

The Lake Norman Marine Commission met in Regular Session on Thursday, March 19, 2026, at 7:00 p.m., in the Conference Room at the Charlotte Water – Dukes Treatment Plant 7980 Babe Stillwell Farm Rd., Huntersville, NC 28078.

Members present were Barbara G. Beatty, Richard C. Gaskins, Timothy Holder, Mark Mullen, Jason Ralston, Cameron Sloan, Gregory Truesdell, and Billy Wilson. Also present were Catawba County Manager Mary Furtado and Centralina Regional Council staff support to the board Megan Upchurch.

1. Call to Order. Commission Chair Truesdell called the regular meeting of the Lake Norman Marine Commission to order at 7:00 p.m., noting a quorum was present.

2. Public Comments. Jack Binnon, a resident of the Lake Norman community, introduced himself to the Commission and spoke to the commissioners about Short Term Rentals and resulting boat rental issues both past and present. He followed up his comments by thanking the commissioners for their work in getting the commission back up and running.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Holder made a motion to approve the Minutes from both the Special Called Meeting and the Regular Meeting of the February 19, 2026, Lake Norman Marine Commission. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gaskins and passed unanimously.

4. Partner Reports.

- Town of Cornelius, Lincoln County, Catawba County, and Iredell County law enforcement officers individually provided a debrief of activities on the Lake between the February and March meeting. Town of Cornelius reported various updates related to ATONS in their jurisdiction, with Lincoln County, Catawba County, and Iredell County Lake Patrol staff noting they will begin providing ATONS updates to the Commissioners starting next month.
- Mecklenburg County Water Quality's Dave Ferguson provided an update on the lake's water quality, summarizing the January 2026 and March 2026 monitoring reports and noting various seasonal changes that can be seen in the data. Mr. Ferguson provided an overview of data collection methodologies for Mecklenburg County's water quality monitoring activities on Lake Norman, Lake Davidson, and



Lake Cornelius. Additionally, he shared information on “StoryMap,” found on Mecklenburg County’s website, which now includes swimming advisories and detailed lake data. Mr. Ferguson concluded his presentation by providing QR codes on how to sign up for text and phone notices regarding swim advisories. A question was raised regarding algae blooms, and Mr. Ferguson provided a brief overview of the effects of algae blooms, noting harmful effects on humans and animals.

- Cayce Brennan with Duke Energy Lake Services provided updates on the lake’s water levels, indicating they will slowly rise until meeting recreational levels, typically in May. Ms. Brennan shared by way of update to a question asked at the February meeting regarding fuel barges that Duke Energy has determined fuel barges will not be a permitted activity.
- Catawba Riverkeepers’ Brandon Jones provided multiple updates, including the Riverkeepers’ citizen science initiative, a floating classroom planned to launch in the next couple months in time for summer, and a request for \$1000 to support the Riverkeepers’ work, which the Commission has provided in previous years. Mr. Jones additionally provided updates on North Carolina’s new standards for E Coli, and changes to stormwater runoff requirements for redevelopment sites resulting from House Bill 369.
- NC Wildlife Resource Commission – Not present. No report.
- NC Department of Environmental Quality – Not present. No report.
- NC Wildlife Federation – Commissioner Wilson provided an update on the Exoform reef project discussed at the February 2026 Commission meeting, noting the project is being delayed due to the Army Corps of Engineers exploring whether a permit is needed for installation. Mr. Wilson further noted the Annual Clean and Green event is coming up in April.

5. Committee Assignments. Ms. Furtado reviewed and confirmed the Commissioners’ willingness to serve on each sub-committee as noted in the table included in the agenda packet. Ms. Furtado noted sub-committee meeting will need to be prioritized during this period of interim staffing, but the committees for ATONS and No Wake Buoys and Charter Boat, Rental Boat, and Rafting Event Permit Applications are anticipated to begin between the March and April Commission meetings. Environmental, Education, and Government / Legislative Affairs committees will be stood up as soon as staff capacity and commissioner interest permits.



6. Executive Director recruitment update. Ms. Furtado updated the Commission on the Executive Director recruitment efforts, noting the position was posted by Catawba County on Friday, February 20, and shared with County Managers and Commissioners in the interim to cross promote. Catawba County has completed the initial screening of each of 5 applicants and are now ready for the Commissioners to review. She inquired with the Commissioners regarding the type of process they would like to see for the selection process. Commissioner Beatty recommended one person from each county to be on the selection committee. There was discussion of the pros and cons of virtual versus in-person interviews. Chair Truesdell solicited Commissioners' feedback regarding the best path forward. With no one offering any strong feelings regarding one path forward versus another, Chair Truesdell indicated he would devise a process and built around Commissioner Beatty's suggestion to keep the process moving.

7. Operational Update

- ATONS maintenance and repair status update: Mr. Gary Mozeley and Mr. Mark Mozeley of Mozeley Construction were present to provide status updates to the Commission. A total of 24 service repairs were completed between the February and March meetings. Twenty of those repairs were critical related to safety, and four involved installation of osprey nest pedestals. Mr. Mozeley and Commissioners discussed the need for temporary lighting during periods where materials are on order. Commissioner Wilson and Mr. Mozeley discussed various options for managing the osprey nests while staying compliant with the 1918 Migratory Bird Act. Commissioner Wilson and NC Wildlife are on board to assist with this process as needed. Concerns were raised by members of the public in attendance regarding a shoal that has migrated and caused several boats to run aground in the past six months. Commissioners discussed this concern in depth and noted that the marker replacement for D3 be made a priority. Ms. Furtado noted Duke Energy's \$18,000 contribution toward ATONS repair and maintenance on Lake Norman.
- Ms. Furtado provided an update on NCDEQ's Technical Advisory Group report and summarized a recent meeting she and Commissioner Wilson attended regarding invasive species, specifically Hydrilla (62 acres total, mostly near Buffalo Shoals Rd. and Mundy Creek) and Lyngbya (about 26 acres present, in 7 different point locations). A subgroup was set up from the NCDEQ meeting to devise the treatment plan and proposed cost share arrangement to address these issues. The



commission will continue to actively participate in this group and report out at regular Commission meetings.

- Ms. Furtado briefly addressed where we are in the budget process and the intention to have a draft available for discussion at the Commission's April meeting. Counties have agreed to create a budget placeholder, with Centralina and Catawba County preparing a draft, and the Commission's attorney is now under contract.

8. Charter and Rental Boat Regulations – Duke Energy Feedback: Ms. Brennan from Duke Energy provided an overview of Duke Energy's edits on the Commission's charter and rental boat regulations to ensure alignment with shoreline management guidelines, including updated definitions. The primary issue with the regulations as written is there has been ambiguity regarding rental activity emanating out of private residences on the lake, which violates the FERC regulations related to unpaid public access to the lake. She noted that in situations where residents violate rental boat or charter boat rules, Duke Energy may revoke pier permits as a consequence. This led to an in-depth discussion on boat rentals associated with Airbnb properties and how those might be managed. Concerns were raised about boater safety in situations where people rent homes which are accompanied by boats included in the rental fee. Ms. Furtado noted that this topic is wrought with complexity and should be further discussed with the Commission's attorney at a future date.

9. Commissioner Resignation: Ms. Furtado updated the Commission on Commissioner Kristian Hernandez's resignation, which was tendered between the February and March meetings due to a change in Mr. Hernandez's personal situation related to the military deployment of his spouse. She noted Iredell County Board of Commissioners announced the board vacancy at its March meeting and anticipates filling the vacancy in April.

10. Advertising Proposals: Ms. Furtado presented the Best Kept Boating Secrets advertising proposal, explaining that materials would be distributed at events and that the \$250 ad would direct individuals to the Commission and the Commission's website. Mr. Gaskins moved to approve the proposal, Ms. Beatty seconded, and the motion passed 8–0. Regarding the Lake Norman Chamber of Commerce proposal, concerns were raised that the publication focuses on only part of the lake, and the Commission decided to instead redirect those funds toward safety initiatives. Commissioner Gaskins asked who manages the Commission website, and Mary confirmed that Iredell County currently manages it,



though the Commission is considering shifting management to Centralina in the next contract cycle.

11. Open Discussion: Commissioner Wilson asked about the Commission’s social media presence, noting that a Facebook page previously existed. Ms. Furtado noted that she would investigate. Commissioner Beatty welcomed Mecklenburg County Commissioner Elaine Powell, who expressed interest in joining the Charter, Rentals, and ATONS committees to share constituent feedback and help identify gaps in current issues. She then thanked Duke Energy for its contributions, recognized Dave Fergusson for his dedication to lake operations, and thanked Ms. Furtado for her work in helping to re-establish the Commission. Commission Gaskins proposed continuing the Commission’s annual donation to the Catawba Riverkeeper. His proposal would be taken under advisement during development of the FY26-27 Budget.

12. Adjourn. With no further business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m. after a motion by Commissioner Holder, which was seconded by Commissioner Beatty, passed unanimously.