



Lake Norman Marine Commission Regular Meeting Minutes – June 16, 2026

The Lake Norman Marine Commission met in Regular Session on Thursday, June 16, 2026, at 7:00 p.m., in the Community Room at St. Peter By-the-Lake at 8433 Fairfield Forest Road, Denver, NC 28037.

Members present were Barbara Beatty, Jarid Church, Richard Gaskins, Tim Holder, Mark Mullen, Jason Ralston, Cameron Sloan, and Billy Wilson. Also present were Catawba County Manager Mary Furtado and Centralina Regional Council staff support to the board Megan Upchurch. Members not present were Gregory Truesdell.

1. **Call to Order.** Commission Vice-Chair Beatty 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.** The floor was opened for public comment regarding items listed on the meeting agenda. No members of the public stepped forward to comment, and the public comment session was closed.
3. **Approval of Minutes.** Commissioner Gaskins made a motion to approve the Regular Minutes of the May 21st Lake Norman Marine Commission meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wilson and passed unanimously.
4. **Partner Reports**
 - Town of Cornelius, Lincoln County, Catawba County, Iredell County law enforcement as well as NC Wildlife Resource Commission officers individually provided a debrief of activities on the Lake between the May and June meetings. Each law enforcement agency reported on service calls, ATONS updates, property checks, trainings, as well as community outreach and education events.
 - Duke Energy Lake Services: Mr. Caleb Williams presented the Lake Services update, reporting that while lake levels remain low, they have finally stabilized and are no longer dropping. The region remains under mandatory drought protocol status. Following the update, the board raised questions regarding the equipment being used and the erosion control measures currently in place at the Beatties Ford access site.
 - Mecklenburg County Water Quality: County staff provided an overview of the Mecklenburg County water quality data from May 12th, noting sampling occurred during a period of exceptionally low water levels. Currently, lake temperatures are hovering in the



low 80s. Due to these low water levels making the Blithe access point inaccessible, operations and monitoring are temporarily being conducted out of the Beatties Ford access area.

- Catawba Riverkeeper: Mr. Brandon Jones reported that water quality is currently excellent. A request was made for backup boat captains to assist with upcoming water sampling activities. Mr. Jones shared House Bill 369 has moved out of committee and advanced to the Senate, and the Riverkeeper continues to monitor the progress of House Bill 586 regarding wake surfing regulations. Additionally, the floating classroom program has successfully hosted students from all surrounding lake counties.
- NC Wildlife Federation / Lake Norman Wildlife: Commissioner Wilson shared that the Federation is close to deploying its 3D-printed fish house reef. This project marks a major milestone, as it will be the first time this type of structure has been deployed in a public access area worldwide. Installations are scheduled to take place in the next few weeks. To measure the project's impact, DNA sampling will be conducted both before and after the installation to better understand local fish populations and their habits. He also noted that the Adopt an Island program is currently in full swing.
- NC Department of Environmental Quality – Not present. No report.

5. **Public Hearing: FY26/27 Budget Approval:** Vice Chair Beatty invited Ms. Furtado to provide a detailed overview of the FY27 Recommended Budget. A motion to open the public hearing on the FY27 Recommended Budget was made by Commissioner Holder and seconded by Commissioner Ralston before passing unanimously. Vice Chair Beatty invited public comment. With no one coming forward to speak, Commissioner Holder made a motion to close the public hearing, seconded by Commissioner Ralston, and the motion passed unanimously. Subsequently, Commissioner Holder motioned to approve the budget as presented, which was seconded by Commissioner Ralston and approved 8-0.

6. **Non-Project Use Application: Lake Norman Dredging & Marine Construction, Inc.:** Ms. Furtado provided a brief high-level overview of the proposed dredging project at the current Lake Norman Dredging location and invited the applicant to address any questions the Commission may have. Mr. Shannon Miller presented the project details, outlining planned improvements including a boat ramp, a tidal lift, and a bulkhead. In response to questions regarding the bulkhead's length, it was confirmed to be 127 feet. Mr. Broadway provided additional context regarding the proposed project, noting that it meets the requirements of Duke's shoreline management plan and that Duke does not have any issues with the project as proposed.

Several commissioners raised environmental and procedural questions. Regarding water turbidity, the applicant noted that testing will be conducted as necessary; there are no



immediate plans to monitor this by default. When asked about containment precautions, the applicant stated the bulkhead is intended to assist with containment, and all transported material will remain contained throughout the process. The Board held a hearty discussion regarding whether sediment runoff should be contained utilizing settling ponds or filtration setup, and it was pointed out that NC Department of Environmental Quality would also be offering comments and is better positioned to comment on erosion concerns. It was reiterated that the LNMC's comments should focus primarily on overall safety and recreational access. Commissioner Holder motioned to approve the project, which was seconded by Commissioner Ralston. The motion passed unanimously.

7. **Centralina COG Administrative Services Contract:** The Commission reviewed the Centralina Regional Council contract for administrative support for FY27. Commissioner Holder made a motion to approve the contract, which was seconded by Commissioner Ralston. The motion passed unanimously.
8. **Executive Director Selection:** Ms. Furtado and Commissioner Holder provided a comprehensive overview of the selection process and the criteria that led to the selection of Jim Loftin as the new Executive Director. Following the summary, Commissioner Ralston moved for the Lake Norman Marine Commission to approve formally engaging Mr. Loftin as LNMC Executive Director and instruct legal counsel to prepare an independent contractor agreement for signature by the parties. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Holder and passed unanimously.
9. **Operations Update:** Ms. Furtado presented updates on the status of ATON maintenance, replacement, and repair. During the update, Commissioner Holder questioned the status of securing emergency buoys to be deployed when primary shoal markers or other navigational aides are missing, and Ms. Furtado agreed to follow up with Mosley directly.
10. **Committee Updates:** Ms. Furtado shared the Commission's attorney, Chris Clark, is in the process of updating the rental boat and charter boat regulations (and also integrating requested changes into the draft bylaws). The intention is for committees to meet between the June and July meetings so proposed changes to these regulations can be brought before the full Commission for discussion. On behalf of the Environmental Committee, Commissioner Gaskins reported the grass carp have been stocked. Additionally, Commissioner Wilson shared the exciting update that wildlife conservationist Jeff Corwin is coming to town to film a segment on the Lake Norman osprey.
11. **Open Discussion.** During the open discussion period, Commissioner Holder asked Riverkeeper Brandon Jones if the organization had an official stance on S587, the Wake



Surfing bill. Brandon indicated the organization has not taken an official stance.

Commissioner Holder recommended the Commission consider formally weighing in on the matter, supported by Commissioner Mullen, who noted this could be an opportunity for LNMC to establish an advocacy presence. Finally, Commissioner Mullen expressed a desire to develop a more comprehensive process for event permitting, to potentially incorporate a mechanism to recapture expenses associated with law enforcement staffing for these public events.

12. **Adjourn.** With no further business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m. after a motion by Commissioner Sloan, which was seconded by Commissioner Gaskins, passed unanimously.