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**LNMC MINUTES**

**April 8, 2019**

**At the CHARLES MACK CITIZENS CENTER, Mooresville, NC**

**Lake Norman Marine Commissioners:**

John Gerke Chairman

Billy Wilson Iredell County

Michael Hughes Lincoln County (absent)

Dennis Eddinger Mecklenburg County

David Scott Catawba County

**Staff:**

Morris Sample Executive Director

Bob Elliott Assistant Director

Angela Palmer Administrator

**Call to Order**

A quorum was declared and the meeting was called to order by Chairman John Gerke at 7:00 pm.

All in attendance rose to salute the flag and repeat together the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Minutes**

After a review of the minutes from the March 11, 2019 meeting, approval of the minutes as presented were passed unanimously.

**Reports – LNMC Executive Director**

Executive Director Morris Sample reported the following items:

* Releasing first batch of 6,000 grass carp at Blythe Landing at 8:00am Thursday, April 11th. The remainder will be released at Ramsey Creek sometime the following week. There was a press release last week. All are welcome to come and observe.
* Last fall through this spring has been the wettest in history and we want to thank Duke Energy for managing this very well.
* Shout out to the Cornelius Police Department with a small project regarding some new navigational lights.

**REPORTS - ENFORCEMENT**

**Cornelius Police Department**

Officer Figaro reported 5 calls for service and there were no citations. Calls were most often between 6:00am-1:00pm. March 30th overdue boater reported – located 2.5 hours later.

**Iredell County Sheriff**

Lake Patrol with Iredell County reported 16 on the water hours. No wake calls have already started, but all have been in regards to bass boats during tournaments. Plan to reach out to event coordinators. March 30th was the Lake Norman Yacht Club Keelboard Parade & Salute. April 18th Operation North State Disabled Vets Fishing tournament. Requesting volunteer boaters.

**Catawba County**

Catawba County Sheriff’s office – No report

**Lincoln County**

Lincoln County Lake Patrol – No Report

**N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission**

Sargent Ron Robertson reported on March 19th was the annual wildlife resources meeting. Discussion about the removal of abandoned boats. Duke removed 8 boats last year and Wildlife removed 5. Scott Jolly suggested if the boat has an identifiable registration it will be reported to Wildlife and will be their responsibility. If unidentifiable, then Duke Energy will be responsible. Presentation by biologist with Duke on Hydrilla. April 3-4 officers attended training at Mitchell Community College. Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement – helps to identify impairment other than alcohol. Saturday, April 13th is opening Turkey season. April 12-14th teaching Becoming an Outdoor Woman. April 18th Operation Northstate. Mid May an intern will be joining the team. On the Road, On the Water will have media day on May 22nd. May 25th and 27th will be the first stage of the campaign. Phase 2 will be Labor Day weekend. July 24th will be the McQuire lake clearing drill.

**Reports – Lake Issues**

**Duke Energy**

Joe Klutz reported the hydro group has done an excellent job managing the water levels. Today is 97.9 with target at 97. Target will transition to recreational target of 98 in May. Duke is directing people to the LNMC website for Hydrilla information.

Dr. Brett Hartis – Aquatic Plant Management Program

* Hydrilla – the “perfect aquatic weed”. #1 problem aquatic weed problem in the US. >144 sq inches/day. Originated from N. Korea. Very expensive if not controlled. Usually brought in by boats. Tubers are the unseen problem and can stay dormant up to 10 years. Clipping duplicates the growth. Grass carp is the biological option in reservoirs where there are no native vegetation. Average fish life is 15 years. Need adequate annual surveys. Fish eat 150% of body weight/day until they reach 10lbs. Goal to educate the public and get a handle on it before it gets out of control.

**Coast Guard Auxiliary Division 26**

Steve Riggan reported no on the water hours. 29 vessel safety checks in March.

1. Flotilla 26-04 held an About Safety Boating in March – 3 adult and 2 youth. Tow adults had no boating experience, all passed the course.
2. Patrol season started April 1. A qualification event for the Boat Crew Program was conducted April 7. Patrol schedules are being planned now.
3. May 18 National Safe Boating Week and Boating Safety Booth will be held at Beatty’s Ford ramp.

**Lake Norman – America’s Boating Club**

Commander Lou Swartz reported March 23rd was the first ABC course with 43 students, all passed. Recruited 3 new members. The youngest was 12 and the oldest was 77, the average was 49. April 6th 1st vessel safety check at the PYC – inspected 27 boats. April 13th Blessing of the Fleet at Marker 17A followed by lunch at Port City Club. May 4th 2nd vessel safety check. Dragon Boat Race May 18th at Ramsey Creek. May 29th Lunch Bunch. June 22nd Lake Safety Day.

**Mecklenburg County Parks and Rec.**

No Report

**Island Habitat Program**

Billy Wilson (see wildlife report)

**Water Quality/Erosion/Buffers/Illegal Discharge**

**Mecklenburg County Water Quality**

Dave Ferguson reported on the lake March 18th. Water temp is coming up and clearing up from the excessive rain. The lake looks great as well as Lake Cornelius and Lake Davidson. Starting in May fecal samples will begin. When Ramsey Creek opens swim area, weekly Monday and Wednesday testing will begin.

**NC Wildlife Federation**

Commissioner Billy Wilson reported the osprey at the Osprey Cam nest have laid their first 3 eggs of the season. LNWC.org to view camera. Just finished installing the great blue heron cam. Installed manmade heron rookery. The osprey have built a nest on it and may deter the heron from nesting. The cam will be made public soon and will also be available at lnwc.org. The ATON project converting 11 ATONS to osprey platforms has been completed. Beneficiary of Earth Jam on Saturday, April 27th. Morning Star Marina event on May 11th has been canceled.

**Comments from the Public:**

* Becky Fox – request the commission evaluate the process of no wake buoys. 2015 report showed 10% in poor condition and 60% unapproved. Request the approval process be paused until the issue is addressed.
* Emily Cush – concerned about the number of no wake buoys and who is responsible for maintaining. Suggest their be more control and address the current buoys before approving more.
* Joe Kluttz – (not representing Duke Energy, speaking ONLY as a citizen of the lake) – No Wake Buoys – found an article from 2015 regarding the number of buoys. 60% are illegal. NC Wildlife has a clearly defined process that states buoys not approved are unlawful. Need buoy approval committee.
* Gary Herrault – requested no wake buoy last month. Request the process not be changed. Also request if approved then approve cheaper lights for the buoys. Request the approval of both buoys to allow for better visibility.

**Committee Reports:**

**ATON Committee**

Morris Sample reported the following…

* Main Channel Marker 6 was knocked down and has been replaced. It includes a temporary sign that will be replaced with a permanent sign as soon as available.
* Bridge buoys at Hwy 150.

**Environmental Committee**

Billy Wilson – No Report

**Boater Education/Communication**

David Scott reported looking for input on additional classes. Finishing survey with the dealers.

**Charter Boat Committee**

Dennis Eddinger reported they had annual meeting on April 14th. All boats have been inspected and passed. Permitting passed unanimously for the Catawba Queen, Lady of the Lake, Nopheke, Carolina Grace, Yachta Yachta Yachta, Lot of Yachta Yachta Yachta, Not a lot of Yachta Yachta Yachta, Charlotte Cycle Boat.

**No Wake Buoys**

Michael Hughes – No report

**Rafting Committee**

Michael Hughes – No Report

**Applications**

**No-Wake Buoy Requests**

* Gary Herrault – Commissioner Scott made a motion to approve one buoy. Commissioner Gerke seconded. Commissioner Eddinger requested a committee be formed to review the process. Commissioner Scott agreed. Commissioner Wilson is concerned about the location of the buoy. Chairman Gerke agrees that older buoys were placed before the marine commission was involved and trying to remove them is difficult and costly. Mr. Herrault has met the conditions and should have at least one buoy approved. Commissioner Scott and Chairman Gerke in favor, Commissioner Wilson and Commissioner Eddinger against. A voting tie resulted in the application not being approved.

**Rafting Applications**

**Charter Boat Applications**

**Variances**

None

**PERMITS**

None

**FERC Applications**

None

**Administrative Matters**

Commissioners were advised that the budget for Contractual Services & Risk Management was reduced by $1000 each and the budget for Boater Education & Hydrilla Management was increased by $1000 each. These budget line items have been recategorized to meet financial obligations without using any reserves.

**Adjournment**

The next meeting will be May 13, 2019. The meeting was adjourned at 8:21pm.