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LNMC MINUTES

May 11, 2020

At the CHARLES MACK CITIZENS CENTER, Mooresville, NC

Lake Norman Marine Commissioners:

Billy Wilson	Chairman
Michael Hughes	Lincoln County
Dennis Eddinger	Mecklenburg County
David Scott	Catawba County
Rick Howard	Iredell County

Staff:

Morris Sample	Executive Director
John Gerke	Asst. Ex. Director
Angela Palmer	Administrator

Call to Order

A quorum was declared and the meeting was called to order by Chairman Wilson 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 9, 2020 meeting, there was a motion to approve by Commissioner Dennis Eddinger, seconded by Commissioner Michael Hughes. Approval of the minutes as presented were passed unanimously.

Reports – LNMC Executive Director

Executive Director Morris Sample reported the following items:

- Lake traffic has been relatively heavy for this time of year. It is anticipated that due to other travel restrictions, we may see heavy traffic on the lake during the weekends. Be advised that most marinas have establish procedures for docking and getting gas and supplies. Please contact the marina prior to arrival for any special instructions. Also, policy on rental boats vary according to the location. Please be cautious of group gatherings at islands or raft ups.
- Marine Commission has an agreement with the NC Wildlife to install acoustic receivers on 27 of the lake ATON's. These receivers are being used for a study of hybrid bass and next year on grass carp to determine movement of fish and establish mortality rates. You may notice a cable attached to the marker pole just above the high-water level. Please do not disturb or remove these transmitters.
- NC Wildlife, Duke Energy, Charlotte Water and LNMC has agreed to a program of stocking Lake Norman with grass carp to facilitate a mortality study over the next couple of years. The plan is to stock an estimated 750 grass carp each spring which will provide a sufficient population to conduct this study. Starting in the FY 20-21, several grass carp will be tagged with acoustic

transmitters and the network of receivers will track the movements of the fish and their survivability. The stocking for 2020 should occur in the next couple of weeks.

- Unfortunately, Lake Norman had their first fatality of the year a few weeks ago. Please ensure that everyone on your vessel wears appropriate personnel floatation especially while participating in water sports activities.

Due to meeting restrictions, boater education classes scheduled have been delayed. Online courses are available through several organizations. Also, information on boater regulations is available on the NC Wildlife website with links on the Marine Commission Website, LNMC.ORG. The Lake Norman Boater's Guide is located under the Resources tab and lists information on facilities and boating regulations.

REPORTS - ENFORCEMENT

Cornelius Police Department

Officer Figaro reported 29 calls for service in April. Average response time 3.6 minutes. Social Distancing is going well. Allowed to raft up but with no more than 10 people. Lake traffic is very high. Will try to attend the fish drop on May 20th. Would like more information regarding the sea plane which has been observed.

Iredell County Sheriff

Lake Patrol with Iredell County – No report

Catawba County

Catawba County Lake Patrol – No report

Lincoln County

Lincoln County Lake Patrol – No Report

N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission

Ron Robertson reported ramps are very busy. All NC bodies of water are very busy. Everybody is adhering to the 6' rule for the most part. The only issue is the pontoon boats with more than 10 people, but hard to determine who is family. Reminding people to adhere to the recommended guidelines. A few instances of calls of rafting up with multiple boats and multiple people. Asking them to disperse. Some comply, others choose to remain. Currently not pressing the issue. This may change as the summer ramps up. Intoxilizer Certification is good for 2 years and rotates. Officers are unable to attend class during this situation. Acquired new boats equipped with radar that will detect boats running with no lights. Standardized Field Sobriety class has been canceled. May 23-25th is On the Road, On the Water Don't Drink and Drive Campaign. July 3-5th Dry Water Campaign. September 5-7th 2nd On the Road, On the Water Don't Drive and Drive Campaign. On Thursday, March 26th minor boating accident during event at Pinnacle boat ramp. On Sunday, April 25th a gentleman in 16' john boat was hit by 18' boat. He saw it coming and was able to jump out and was unharmed. Sunday, May 3rd in Iredell County a pontoon boat was rented by 3 men and 1 lady. The men were tubing with no life preservers. One fell off and did not resurface. His body was recovered within a few hours. Alcohol was involved. In Lincoln County, officers responded to a man who fell off of his jetski and was hit by a motor boat. Both men had consumed alcohol. The victim had several prop cuts on his arms. The person driving the motor boat was charged with a DWI. Other charges pending. Situation with guys working on a dock and accused of shooting nail guns at an Osprey nest. Could not confirm but did speak with the gentlemen.

Reports – Lake Issues

Duke Energy

Executive Director reported on behalf of Lake Services. Lake levels as of May 10th were at 98.2 and the target level is 98. The target elevation will remain at 98 for the duration of the recreation season through September. Lake Services is still accepting and processing lake use permit applications at this time, but with a very limited amount of office time for staff. All calls will be routed to voicemail and returned. You will receive a more timely response if you email lakeservices@duke-energy.com instead of calling. During normal business operations, we advise applicants to expect it to take up to 30 days to process a lake use

permit application. However, our reduced office presence will likely result in longer permit application processing times than is typical, so please plan accordingly.

Coast Guard Auxiliary Division 26

Steve Riggins reported:

- On water activities are typically conducted on Lake Norman from April 1 – October 30.
- All in-person CG Auxiliary activities were suspended in early March due to the COVID-19 pandemic, so all activity for on-water patrols, Vessel Examinations, and boating safety classes has ceased.
- CG Auxiliary is authorized to hold virtual on-line meetings for routine business and on-line member training, which has been taken advantage of by the Lake Norman flotillas.
- A new computer system to track CG Auxiliary activity is being rolled-out as of the writing of this report (it was already planned for this timeframe). We may be able to access the system for updated statistical information prior to the June 2020 LNMC meeting.

Lake Norman – America's Boating Club

Lou Swartz reported had a zoom meeting and was well represented. Unable to have any boating activities or inspections. Currently at a standstill. Waiting to perform the ATON survey and reporting. For tomorrow's meeting was canceled and reports will be mailed in.

Mecklenburg County Parks and Rec.

No Report

Island Habitat Program & NC Wildlife Federation

Chairman Billy Wilson reported exciting news, just surpassed 4 million views on the webcam. The osprey laid their first clutch of eggs, but all eggs were eaten by a crow. A third osprey distracted the parents. Last week they laid a second clutch of eggs. This one contains 2 eggs. Sitting back and hoping for the best. The Heron cam, which is in it's second year has been currently offline. Working to determine the issue. Called it quits on repairing and have been sent a new camera which includes infrared allowing night viewing. Heron Island stabilization is 2/3 complete. It is federally protected and work has been stopped until after the nesting season is complete.

Catawba Riverkeepers

Michael Lindsey reported he is now on staff with the Catawba Riverkeepers. Appreciate collaboration with LNMC. Update on weekly E-coli monitoring between Memorial Day and Labor Day at all popular swimming locations. A map has been presented to the Executive Director. Results will be posted on Fridays to the website. Have seen E-coli events occurring after large rain events. +10,000 have visited the app to check these levels. The purpose to provide timely and safe swimming results. Platform for expanding broader testing.

Water Quality/Erosion/Buffers/Illegal Discharge

Mecklenburg County Water Quality

Dave Ferguson – No report

Comments from the Public:

- Commissioner Powell from Mecklenburg County – Thanked the Commission for their service. Is there anything the Commission would like to share with or ask elected officials? Also, are you pleased with the results of the grass carp to control hydrilla. Response by the Commission – ability to maintain fish to keep the hydrilla problem under control. Commissioner Powell is the liaison between elected officials of Meck County and the State. Protecting natural resources is a passion and she encourages being more involved.
- Michelle and Robert Tubbs – just new and listening issues with the buoys.

- Rhyne Scott – No Wake Buoy for Charlie Lombard – Wanted to comment in favor of. Believe this buoy would help along Riviera Dr.
- Gilbert Moore – Mother worked for Duke for 45 years and has always lived on the lake. Lives on Riviera Dr. Afraid to let grandchildren jump off of dock due to safety. Would like to have buoys installed. Please come Memorial Day weekend and observe what is happening in this area. Catawba County Sheriffs Dept has been incredible. Disappointed in NC Wildlife.
- Don Carney – Shout out to David Scott and shout out to Rick Howard. Lives on Riviera Dr in Sherrills Ford. Major problem on the point that is a safety issue and safety concern. Speeding boats buzzing docks within 50'. Law enforcement was supportive of the buoys that were installed illegally. Supporting Charlie Lombard's buoy application.

Committee Reports:

ATON Committee

Morris Sample reported the following needs repair...

- All bridge buoys are back in place
 - M1 and Marker 7 lights are not working due to osprey nests. This will not be able to be repaired until the fall, after nesting season.
 - America's Boating Club will be surveying all of the ATON's again this year and reporting back anything that needs repair.
 - Report any ATON information to lnmc@lnmc.org

The following was brought for discussion during the No Wake Buoy Application segment below... Commissioner David Scott has recommended an ATON for the area presented by Charlie Lombard. This may eliminate the need for a buoy. However, the ATON and the buoy need to be considered separately. This ATON would be numbered 17C and would fall in sequence with the existing ATONS. Chairman Wilson supports Commissioner Scott's recommendation. Commissioner Eddinger commented that being a captain you should always be able to see an ATON. Supports the addition of an ATON. They are more visible than a buoy. Recommended trying the ATON first. Commissioner Hughes made a motion to approve ATON 17D. Commissioner Eddinger seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Scott made a motion to add a second ATON on the south end of Riviera. Commissioner Howard seconded. The motion passed unanimously. This ATON will be 17C.

Environmental Committee

Morris Sample – see previous comments under Executive Director report

Boater Education/Communication

Dave Scott – People are coming to the website and the usage has been doubled since the 1st of April. Viewing laws and regulations which is great news! Approximately 1000 new users.

Charter Boat Committee

Commissioner Eddinger reported all but one company has had their boats inspected and passed. There was no meeting in March due to COVID-19. Request motion to grant permits. Commissioner Dennis Eddinger made a motion to approve the charter boat permits for this boating season. Commissioner David Scott seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

No Wake Buoys

Commissioner Michael Hughes – No report

Rafting Committee

Chairman Rick Howard – No Report

Applications

No-Wake Buoy Requests

Charlie Lombard from Sherrills Ford across from Marker 15A. This was presented in March. Chairman Billy Wilson and Assistant Executive Director John Gerke did go to the area to observe on Saturday, May 2nd. Found the area to be very concerning, in terms of speed and location. It was too rough to get a depth reading. Commissioner Hughes makes a motion to approve a No Wake Buoy presented by Charlie Lombard. Commissioner Howard seconded. The motion passed with 3 yeses and 1 no.

Rafting Applications - None

Charter Boat Applications - None

Variances

None

PERMITS

None

FERC Applications

None

Administrative Matters

19-20Q3 Financial Reports were presented to the commissioners. Budget numbers will need to be adjusted to add the two ATON's voted on during this meeting. This will be presented at the June meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:36pm.