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LNMC MINUTES

**August 09, 2021
Charles Mack Citizens Center
 Mooresville, NC**

Lake Norman Marine Commissioners:

Michael Hughes	Chairman
Dennis Eddinger	Mecklenburg County
David Scott	Catawba County
Rick Howard	Iredell County
Christopher Uzzolina	Lincoln 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 Hughes 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 July 12, 2021 meeting, there was a motion to approve by Commissioner Eddinger, seconded by Commissioner Scott . Approval of the minutes as presented were passed unanimously.

Reports – LNMC Executive Director

Executive Director Morris Sample reported the following items:

- Please continue to report any strange looking vegetation growing in Lake Norman. Duke Energy aquatic weed group will investigate any reports. You can report to aquaticplants@duke-energy.com or visit our website at lnmc.org and click on Useful Links, Duke Energy Lake Services. We continue to get reports of Chara, which is apparently having a banner year on Lake Norman. So far, no reports have been observed as hydrilla.
- This notice was posted today on Facebook from Lake Norman Power Boats:

A Public Service Notice:

~~To all:~~

Next Saturday August 14th will be the Lake Norman Fun Run. There will be a large number of Performance Boats, running in small to medium size groups on most of the lake for a few hours midday.

[The Marine Commission is notifying the public and law enforcement about this planned activity. During the meeting it was stated that the start time was set for 9:30 am on Saturday, Aug 14th.](#)

~~Note: Performance Boat captains are highly skilled and some of the most qualified captains on the water, but we can't read your mind.~~

~~Boats pulling tubes in the main channel. Please, please pick a lane and stay in it. Don't cut across the main channel suddenly, without checking behind you first. you might be getting passed on both sides.~~

~~Jet Skis: You WILL NOT be the fastest thing on the lake that day, I assure you. Please check to the side and behind you, before deciding to do a high speed maneuver in the middle of the main channel.~~

~~It's our lake for all to enjoy. Let's just use some common sense so everyone goes home safe at the end of the day.~~

- September is when new officers are elected and marks the end of the term for the outgoing Chairman. On behalf of the Commission, I would like to thank Chairman Hughes for his 5 years of service on the Commission. He will be out of town for the Sept. meeting.
- Want to welcome Casey Joubert and Corey Oakley of the NC Wildlife Commission who will give us an update on the tagging study of grass carp underway on Lake Norman.

SPECIAL REPORT

Casey Joubert District 6 Biologist, Inland Fisheries Division reported study of Grass Carp on Lake Norman to determine survival and movement of the grass carp. Do grass carp survive in the lake when hydrilla is no longer present? Additional goals include determining if the grass carp can leave the system, understand preferred habitat areas and associated vegetation, home range size and seasonal difference in movement/survival. This is being done with a tagging study. The tags send out signal allowing the fish to be tracked. 50 fish are tagged each spring. In April 2021 10 fish were released at each of 5 different locations. The fish are tracked by boat weekly/monthly and data is downloaded during tracking events. Results so far is that there have been >37,000 acoustic detections. All 50 fish have been found since April with 3 confirmed mortalities. The fish tend to be in coves with minimal development, shallow water and varying degrees of vegetation. Future plans are to continue tracking and downloading receivers. The use of kayaks will allow shallow water research. The project will continue with 50 fish being released each spring through 2026. Casey may be reached for questions at casey.joubert@ncwildlife.org or (910) 729-0872

REPORTS - ENFORCEMENT

Cornelius Police Department

Lieutenant Vanzant reported officers responded to 59 calls for service during the month of July. These calls for service were on the lake only. The most calls for service were received on Saturday. Calls for service were most often reported between the hours of 12:00pm-06:00pm. Lake officers conducted 34 vessel stops, issued 4 verbal warnings, 7 written warnings as well as 17 citations. The average response time to calls for service was 7 minutes. Officers self initiated 372 zone checks, 13 Crime Prevention Activities.

- Filmed a mid-summer safety program update video to be posted on social media.
- A deckhand with Boat "Carolina Grace" said he was hit in the face by a green laser pointer while searching for buoys using the spotlight when person on the dock flashed him with a Green Laser pointer. The group was warned about the use of a laser pointer.
- Hosted the Lake Norman Buoy Committee at the Lake Patrol Office
- Officers were flagged down by a stranded vessel at King's Point Marina. The boat had run out of fuel. Due to the high wind conditions officers performed an emergency tow to Kings Point Marina.
- A strong odor of diesel fuel was detected by officers at Safe Harbor Storage. The manager and fire department were notified. The source of the smell could not be located.
- A vessel stop was conducted on owner of Lake Life Rentals at the Sandbar area for operating a PWC after sunset. The owner explained that he was looking for one of his lost renters who said they were at the Sandbar. The lost boater was located and both vessels were escorted back to Ramsey Creek. The business owner was educated on PWC laws/issued a verbal warning.

- Responded to the sandbar in reference to a dispute on a boat. Once in the area the caller's boat was found beached on Heron Island. On arrival the caller/boat owner retreated into the wooded area. A passenger on the boat said he dispute was due to him taking the boat keys due to the owner's impairment. The boat owner refused to come out of the woods after repeated warnings. The subject kept running away from officers, but was eventually captured as he was found hiding under a fallen tree. The subject was extremely impaired and show minor injuries from where he had been fighting with the boat passenger. He was arrested for trespassing on the Island and obstructing officers.
- Navigational hazard (an entire boat lift) on the west side of the old sandbar. The debris is aground and should not become unsecured.
- Big Brothers and Big Sister of Charlotte requested Cornelius Lake Patrol attend the 2021 "Big Day on the Lake" outing. Officer Brinzey met the organizers for the "Blessing of The Fleet" and to be on hand to greet the boat hosts and to provide a safety briefing. This lasted until about 9:15 when everyone disembarked and got underway. Cornelius Lake Patrol rode around meeting and greeting many of the host boats and their "Littles" at which time we allowed them to explore marine 4 and ask questions.
- The winner of the Cornelius Elementary ride along with lake patrol came out for a tour around the lake. The family of 4 spent a couple hours with lake patrol talking about our job, technology and special functions that we provide for the recreational boating community.
- Officers responded to "Hello Sailor" in reference to a boat crash. The suspect boat had left the area, but was located and interviewed at a private dock where he was cited for BWI.
- A boat was back up when it hit (prop strike) a juvenile victim who sustained severe right foot and leg injuries as a result. Wildlife Officers took the boat crash report. Not alcohol related.
- Attended the Lake Norman Marine Commission Marine Commission meeting.
- Cleared several dock billets from navigational waters.

Iredell County Sheriff

Deputy Finch with Iredell County reported 509 hours on the water. July went surprisingly well this year. 4th of July was calm. Increased patrol time around the Hwy 150 bridge due to complaints.

Catawba County

Catawba County Lake Patrol reported 442.75 hours on the water. 21 hours of training. 85 boat inspections and 75 PWC's. 140 violations. 16 vessel assists and removed 25 navigational hazards.

Lincoln County

Lincoln County Lake Patrol – No report

N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission

Sargent Robertson reported July 10th boat accident reported where boat ran aground with minimal damage. Operator arrested for BWI. July 13th PWC operated by female hit a large wake and ejected into the water and suffered a broken tibia. Barge operator struck a marker and broke it in half. The operator will cover the expense of repair. August 1st PWC's operated by minors collided. July 24th BAT mobile was utilized at Hager's Creek access area. Activity was down due to weather. 4 boating warnings, 2 BWI arrests. July 25th a chase with a PWC being operated too close to docks at a high rate of speed. Good Samaritan detained the offender until officers could arrive.

NC Wildlife has taken on the task of removing all unapproved buoys on Lake Norman. This is a state wide mandate from Raleigh on all NC lakes. The plan will be to try and locate the owner who will be given a copy of a pamphlet with the laws for ~~violation-buoys~~ along with a written warning. The owner will have 10 days to remove the buoy. After 10 days ~~if the owner does not remove the buoy, Wildlife the-buoy will be removed~~ if the owner does not remove the buoy, Wildlife the-buoy will be removed ~~the buoy~~ and the owner will be given a citation. ~~After an additional 10 days the buoy will be confiscated and an additional citation issued. If the unapproved buoy is reinstalled, Wildlife will confiscate the buoy and the owner will be issued an additional citation.~~

Reports – Lake Issues

Duke Energy

Chad Broadway reported the lake level at 96.8. The summer target this year is 97.5 due to maintenance.

Coast Guard Auxiliary Division 26

Steve Riggins reported 50 on the water hours.

1. Lake Norman West Flotilla held a one-day in-person/in classroom 8 hour Boat America class at Denver Fire Department in Denver on July 17, 2021

Upcoming Events and Items of Note:

1. The new USCG Chief Director of the Auxiliary Captain Tony Glendye was appointed in July 2021. He is a regular Coast Guard officer in charge of the USCG Auxiliary nation-wide and also heads the USCG office of Recreational Boating Safety. He resides in Denver, NC and boats on Lake Norman. A meeting with the CPD Lake Patrol unit and ride-along has been arranged for Capt. Glendye to experience law enforcement and related boating safety issues first hand on Lake Norman.
2. On-water CG Auxiliary patrols continue with training and safety observation activities, including training for Sea Scout ship members (the ship is a group of Sea Scouts, this group meets in Denver, NC and is sponsored by the Lake Norman West Flotilla).
3. Additional public education classes are being planned for later this year.

Lake Norman – America’s Boating Club

No Report

Mecklenburg County Parks and Rec.

No Report

Island Habitat Program & NC Wildlife Federation

Billy Wilson reported nearing the end of the boating season and therefore the island adopter volunteers will be conducting their fall clean up. Laktoberfest will be Saturday, October 23rd at Bailey Road Park. NC Wildlife Annual Conservation Awards will be September 11th in Cary, NC. Osprey platform review is being performed to assess any damage or hazards to the osprey. Please report any ATONS where osprey are nesting so that a platform may be added. The HOOFF (Hunters Offering Others Food) Program will no longer be offered due to lack of funding.

Catawba Riverkeepers

Executive Director Sample reported for Michael Lindsey that the river sweep program will be October 2nd. More information will be released in the coming weeks.

Water Quality/Erosion/Buffers/Illegal Discharge**Comments from the Public:**

- Commissioner Uzzolina stated that a public statement was released today in regards to the safety of the event this weekend and that he was not consulted prior to the statement being released.
- [Eric Stevenson](#) defended the Fun Run post that he made. The power boaters would like the support of the Lake Norman Marine Commission and the lake officers. Would like to be able to get sponsors to have organized events to raise money for various charities.
- Audrey Miller from Lincoln County in support of the Fun Run. Participant in the Fun Run for 15+ years. Comments [were](#) misunderstood. Very safe event with no documented incidents. Participants come from multiple states.
- Justin Jenkins from Lincoln County in support of the Fun Run. This event has gone on for years and most people are unaware because there have been no incidents. Power boating is a passion and not looking to hurt anyone or their property.

Committee Reports:

ATON Committee

Morris Sample reported the following since last meeting:

- Marker D7- One side sign missing
- Marker 17D pole broken, to be replaced
- Shoal Marker (NW of Marker 2) light out
- Signs that are faded will be replaced as funding is available.
- Shoal markers are being labeled with a number. If you report an outage/damage, please include the marker number to help with identifying.

Environmental Committee

Morris Sample – No report

Boater Education/Communication

Commissioner Scott reported increased activity on the website – up over 25%. Continue to roll out the brand “Love Where You Lake”. Rental boat issue is a continued concern and will be targeted to better educate potential boaters.

Charter Boat Committee

Commissioner Eddinger – No report

No Wake Buoys

Chairman Howard reported a scheduled meeting for the buoy committee tomorrow. In light of the NC Wildlife removing unapproved buoys and the pamphlet being given out by the NC Wildlife there needs to be further discussion to ensure proper guidelines. Billy Wilson reported the buoy committee has met and that the guidelines/ordinance is almost ready. When the application is ready it will be posted to the LNMC website.

Some changes noted from previous version. The applicant would **be required to** present their application during the public hearing. Committee is working through the logistics of an annual survey of buoys. What if any is the role of the commission for unapproved buoys moving forward? Should this be eliminated from the regulation completely?

Commissioner Uzzolina made a motion to support finalizing the ordinance following a conversation with NC Wildlife. Chairman Hughes seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Rafting Committee

Commissioner Uzzolina – No report

Applications

No-Wake Buoy Requests

- None

Rafting Applications

- None

Charter Boat Applications

- None

Variances

- None

PERMITS

- The Osprey at Lake Norman Apartments – Conveyance application for irrigation water withdrawal with an average of 30,000 gallons/week. Commissioner Eddinger made a motion to approve. Commissioner Uzzolina seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

FERC Applications

- None

Administrative Matters

- Review of the 2020-2021 financials. ~~A little more excess due to COVID-19, but will be used. The year ended with a positive cash increase due to lower than anticipated expenses in several categories. Planned activities will increase expenses in the current FY.~~
- The 4th quarter report has been sent to the counties ~~and is posted to the LNMC website. s-~~

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:27pm.

Our next meeting will be September 13, 2021