



MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE LAKE LURE MARINE COMMISSION HELD THURSDAY, JUNE 17, 2021, 5:00 P.M. AT THE LAKE LURE MUNICIPAL CENTER

PRESENT: Mayor Carol C. Pritchett
Mayor Pro Tem John W. Moore
Commissioner Patrick Bryant
Commissioner John Kilby
Commissioner David DiOrio

William Morgan, Jr., Town Attorney
Shannon Baldwin, Town Manager

ABSENT: N/A

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pritchett called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and gave the invocation. Council led the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner John Kilby made a motion to approve the Agenda as presented. Commissioner John Moore seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

III. PUBLIC HEARING

A. PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 21-06-17 AMENDING THE LAKE USE REGULATIONS

Parks, Recreation, and Lake Director Dean Givens provided an overview of the proposed changes to the Lake Use Regulations. The following public comments were received:

Terry Fountain, 191 Tryon Bay, commented in opposition of wake surfing on the Lake.

Julian Reed, 462 Charlotte Drive, commented in opposition of wake surfing being restricted on the Lake.

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Donald Thompson, 2281 Buffalo Shoals Road, spoke in opposition of restrictions to wake surfing on the Lake. He asked for Council to find a compromise with the citizens.

Scott McLaughlin, 185 Allen Drive, commented in opposition of wake board restrictions on the Lake and felt the Town should implement literature to boaters for education on recreation on the Lake.

Darren Blum, 206 Yacht Island Drive, commented that he did not want wake surfing to be banned on the Lake.

Tom Hartmann spoke in favor of limiting wake boats on the Lake because of invasive species that can be introduced into the Lake and can damage turbines in the Dam.

Travis Oates, 114 Harborside Drive, commented in opposition of banning wake surfing on the Lake.

LAB Chairman Mark Helms noted that the LAB discussed the possibility of allowing wake surfing from a further distance offshore. He stated that there is plenty of space on the Lake during the week but mentioned that weekends are much busier and more congested.

Christopher Jackson, 194 Thomas Drive, commented that he did not feel there was a current problem regarding wake surfing and did not feel anything needed to be solved at this point. He spoke in opposition of restricting wake surfing on the Lake and stated that he did not feel the survey was done properly and was rushed. He feels we have bigger problems in the Town to consider and did not want to create disharmony.

Torren Jackson, 194 Thomas Drive, commented that wake boarding is one of his favorite activities on the Lake and he did not want those activities restricted.

Ashley Jackson, 194 Thomas Drive, commented in opposition of wake surfing restrictions on the Lake.

Jim Horwitz, spoke in opposition of restricting wake surfing and suggested a recreation plan for these activities. He did not feel that one sport should be restricted over others.

Monetta Collie, 180 Snug Harbor Circle, expressed her opposition of wake surfing restrictions on the Lake stating that it is a family friendly lake and not a retirement community.

Grace Unruh, 122 Anchors Way, commented that she has been on the Lake since 1952 and was in opposition of restricting wake boarding and recreational use on the Lake as long as safety issues are implemented.

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Brian Walker, 151 Conroy Court, commented that he bought his home with the understanding that he could wake surf and wake boat on the Lake. He expressed his opposition with banning wake surfing and not addressing the other issues on the Lake as well. He agreed that some restrictions could be put in place but was not in favor of a total ban of wake surfing on the Lake.

Jeff Richardson commented that the Lake is much busier now than it has been in the past and did not feel the issues were with wake surfing.

Thatcher Townsend, 2189 Buffalo Shoals Road, thanked Council for their service to the Town and for their approach.

Scott Buchanan, 180 Hummingbird Cove, commented that he has had a home on the Lake for over 30 years and was opposed to restricting wake surfing.

Dave Hill commented that he and his wife are happy that jet skis are not allowed on the Lake and he understands the Lake is small and is in agreement with wake surfing restrictions on the Lake. He feels that there could be a compromise for everyone.

Jenny Parker, 132 Anchors Way, commented that the Lake needs to be made safer and felt that more safety concerns need to be addressed. She asked that safety be addressed more than the size of boats and felt that erosion was not caused from wake boarding and wake surfing.

Scott Carter, 336 Charlotte Drive, commented that he brought his property specifically for a lake that allows wake surfing recreation. He expressed his opposition of completely banning wake surfing activities on the Lake.

Michael Yelton, 193 Sunset Lane, thanked the Marine Commission for their persistence in tackling the dam and sewer issues on the Lake. He also thanked the public for their passion to come out and express their opinions.

Ashley Lowery Marsh, 128 McBrayer Court, commented that there is more traffic on the Lake this year which can cause erosion issues. She did not feel that wake surfing is causing issues with erosion more than any other sport on the Lake.

Michael Gray, 111 Havnaers Point, expressed his approval of banning wake surfing on the Lake. He mentioned that he has had damage to his dock and boat houses this year but was unsure whether or not the damage was caused as a result of the wake created from wake surfers. He also stated that the no wake zones are not being followed as they should be.

Jake Christian, 174 O'Brien Rd., commented that he feels that things should stay the same as much as possible and did not feel that wake boarding was more dangerous and causing more erosion than any other sport on the Lake.

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Commissioner DiOrio expressed that wake surfing is a safety issue and the Marine Commission has the responsibility to ensure safety on the Lake. He announced that numerous complaints have been made from people around the Lake which was the reason the LAB was asked to research it and provide a recommendation to the Marine Commission. Commissioner Bryant pointed out that there are two different communities coming together; long-term residents and newer residents which is a great dynamic for a new Comprehensive Boating Plan for water sports on the Lake.

Commissioner Kilby explained that the LAB researched and reviewed this matter and recommended that anyone wake surfing stay at least 200' from the shoreline. He added that this is a small lake and we have to keep that in mind while also allowing growth.

Commissioner DiOrio explained that the Comprehensive Boating Plan developed in 2006 was the start of a plan to limit certain sizes of boats and to determine what water sports would be allowed. The Plan will continue to be researched and updated as needed. He stated that the number of commercial and resident/non-resident motorized vessels on the Lake has been relatively constant since 2006. However, he stated that there is increased usage of those types of vessels on the Lake at the same time which makes it appear that more permits have been sold this year than have been in the past. He stated that the Lake Use Model may have changed and could be looked into to be updated if needed. Wake surfing was never considered in the 2006 study as it is a relatively newer sport. Their goal now is to take a look at that and get opinions to see if there is an immediate need to change the Regulations in order to promote safety. He stated that the wake produced from wake surfing has inhibited others doing water sports. There are reports of those waves and the proximity of wake surfing causing a variety of dynamics with other people on the Lake. He pointed out that a number of studies in other areas of the country have been conducted on the erosion effect based on the energy from a wake surfing wave and how that relates to other water sports. The waves are high energy and large. When moving towards shore it grows and has a lot of energy which can cause damage. Wave mitigation can be significantly reduced to be classified as safe when wake surfers stay at least 200' from structures and other boaters. He noted that this is universally accepted by NC Wildlife. Currently, the no wake buoys are 100' from shore. He also felt that educating boaters would be affective and beneficial. He also pointed out that boats used to wake surf in other lakes as well have ballasts that are full of water which contain a lot of biological activity from other lakes that we don't want to introduce into our lake. He felt that measures should be taken to limit some activity to prevent that from happening.

Commissioner DiOrio proposed opening a dialogue with the Marine Commission to discuss principles on how to get to a consensus towards a conclusion. He suggested to send principles back to staff to put into a resolution to bring back for consideration at a later time. Mayor Pritchett announced that the Marine Commission will hold another special meeting in July to consider a newly drafted proposed resolution to change the Lake Use Regulations.

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Commissioner Moore felt that the suggestions from the LAB would be a good starting point. LAB Chairman Mark Helms stated that the LAB had a three hour long meeting to review and discuss wake surfing and unanimously recommended to keep wake surfers 200' from the shoreline and structures and only allow Lake Lure tax paying residents permission to wake surf.

Parks, Recreation, and Lake Director Dean Givens addressed enforcement on the Lake. He stated that he and Police Chief Sean Humphries put together a training program and conducted training on the Lake with the Lake Lure police officers. He stated that there will be more enforcement and patrols held on the Lake this year. Chief Humphries added that additional reserve officers will be brought in for additional enforcement on the Lake. Mr. Givens provided a phone number for emergencies on the Lake as well as a number for non-emergencies. Town Manager Shannon Baldwin added that the public can email Mr. Givens or Chief Humphries if they have any issues that they would like to have addressed.

Commissioner David DiOrio made a motion that a new resolution be developed based on comments received from the public and recommendations made from the LAB to apply the 200' rule for wake surfers and to include a map of the Lake, to develop an education and registration protocol for boaters, and to develop a prevention measure for outside boats coming to Lake Lure specifically for ballasting containers to prevent introduction of unwanted species. Commissioner John Moore seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

Commissioner John Moore made a motion to close the public hearing. Commissioner Patrick Bryant seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

<p style="text-align: center;">IV. NEW BUSINESS</p> <p>A. PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 21-06-17 AMENDING THE LAKE USE REGULATIONS</p>
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No action taken at this time. A revised resolution will be presented for consideration at a later time.

<p style="text-align: center;">IV. NEW BUSINESS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">B. LAKE USE SURVEY DISCUSSION</p>
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No discussion held on this topic at this time.

<p style="text-align: center;">V. ADJOURNMENT</p>
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With no further business, Commissioner John Kilby made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m. Commissioner David DiOrio seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

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ATTEST:

Olivia Stewman,
Town Clerk

Mayor Carol C. Pritchett