



**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE LAKE LURE MARINE COMMISSION HELD TUESDAY, JULY 9, 2019, 4:00 P.M. AT THE LAKE LURE MUNICIPAL CENTER**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Pro Tem John W. Moore  
Commissioner Bob Cameron  
Commissioner John Kilby  
Commissioner Stephen M. Webber  
Shannon Baldwin, Town Manager

**ABSENT:** N/A

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Pro Tem John Moore called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

**INVOCATION**

Mayor Pro Tem John Moore gave the invocation and Marine Commission members led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Commissioner Bob Cameron made a motion to approve the Agenda as presented. Commissioner Stephen Webber seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

**PUBLIC FORUM**

Mayor Pro Tem John Moore invited the audience to speak.

Wade Oppliger, Lake Lure Racing, reported that they have received proposals and are planning to hold a regatta on the lake in November. He stated that they hope to do a marathon race, starting from the beach area to Rumbling Bald Resort for a total of 26.2 miles, noting that they are trying to build the event going forward. He mentioned that they will be using 4-person or 8-person row boats and possibly a few kayaks as well. Mr. Oppliger noted that they would launch at 7 a.m. and should be finished by noon.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. CONSIDERATION TO DISCONTINUE LAKE LOWERING EVERY THREE YEARS**

Dean Givens, Parks, Recreation and Lake Director, explained that in the past the Town has lowered the lake every three years to allow property owners the opportunity to perform maintenance on seawalls and boathouses. He further explained that over the years it has been found that lowering the lake has many adverse effects on the fisheries, shoreline, sewer system, boathouses, commercial operations and aesthetics. Mr. Givens added that it also affects the ability for the Town to generate hydroelectricity during drawdown, which could impact revenues as much as \$100,000 per month. He noted that repairs to seawalls and boathouses can be made without the lake being lowered.

Mr. Givens stated that this recommendation is also supported by local contractor Marathon Builders, whose main concern is that lake levels stay consistent and not fluctuate. He expressed the Lake Advisory Board's recommendation that the Marine Commission only lower the lake when needed for repairs instead of on an every three year cycle. He explained that each time the lake is lowered it can inadvertently cause damage to sewer manholes and seawalls, pointing out that the last lake drawdown caused damage to one of the manholes on the lake. Commissioner Cameron commented that a lake drawdown would be necessary at some point to allow for new construction and new sewer lines and did not feel contractors should have to wait a significant amount of time.

Commissioner Webber pointed out that allowing boathouses to be maintained is a tax benefit to the Town noting that Town Council wants to allow property owners the ability to maintain their boathouses in a practical way. He questioned if the Town is making it more difficult for property owners and would be held liable in some way by not lowering the lake to allow for maintenance. He also questioned if it costs more money to perform maintenance with the water down than it would with the water up. Jonathan Hinkle, Marathon Builders, 268 Firefly Cove, replied that it would depend on the process. He stated that building a boathouse, for instance, would not be a difference in rates one way or the other. However, he stated that the cost for a seawall would be lower with the water down as it would not require a cofferdam. He did not feel there would be greater expenses either way with the exception of seawalls. Mr. Hinkle also pointed out that there is no public deep water access to use when the lake is down. He noted that if he needed additional equipment for a project he would have to bring it in by land, which can be more difficult because of steep terrains. Commissioner Webber questioned if DWQ has to be involved with the permitting process for lake structures. Mr. Givens stated that there is a permitting process being put together for lake structures to include all the applications and forms needed but stated that he was unsure if DWQ would be involved.

Mayor Pro Tem John Moore felt that a blanket permit from the Town submitted to DWQ would be convenient for property owners. He asked Mr. Burton if there were currently any applications on file for construction of a new home to be completed when the lake is down in order to connect to town sewer. Mr. Burton replied that he has not had

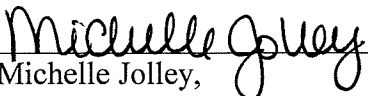
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any applications turned in for construction of a new home. He stated that there is currently an application on file for a partial seawall repair for when the lake is lowered and another seawall repair coming soon. He pointed out that rip rap required for stabilization for those projects would not require the lake to be down. Mr. Burton stated that he is not aware of anyone waiting for the lake to come down in order to tie into the sewer. Commissioner Webber suggested determining to not lower the lake this year and to hold a public hearing at the September Marine Commission Meeting to get public input. Mayor Pro Tem John Moore suggested calling it a public input session rather than a public hearing.

Public Works Director David Arrowood pointed out that there may be situations in which he would have to approach the Board and request the lake to be lowered, such as for the removal of a manhole. He felt that lowering the lake on a case-by-case basis would be acceptable. Mr. Arrowood made Council aware of a homeowner on the lake whose sewer system is failing and asked how to tie into the Town's manhole. He explained that the homeowner would have to cross multiple properties to get to the manhole, which would require him to get permission from every property owner whose property he crosses. Commissioner Webber questioned if the Town is making that situation worse for the homeowner by not lowering the lake. Commissioner Kilby suggested this would be a circumstance for a case-by-case basis to lower the lake.

Mark Helms, 232 Firefly Cove, questioned what level the lake would need to be lowered to in order to connect sewer lines to a manhole and Commissioner Cameron replied around six feet. Mayor Pro Tem John Moore suggested a list compiled and kept on file of all the projects that must to be done while the lake is lowered. He suggested to lower the lake once that list includes a certain number of projects. Commissioner Cameron suggested lowering the lake for 30 days to allow for projects that need to be done with the lake down and discussion ensued. Mr. Givens pointed out that the Polar Plunge occurs every year on January 1<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Helms asked what depth the lake needs to be at in order to continue generating power. Mr. Arrowood replied around 5 or 6 feet. Commissioner Bob Cameron recommended lowering the lake after the Polar Plunge, bringing the lake back up the second or third week in February and holding a public input session to discuss a long-term policy. Mr. Givens also pointed out that dredging process could be potentially be affected and limited during the time the lake is lowered because it is a hydraulic dredge. Commissioner John Kilby suggested the public input session be held in August.

Commissioner Bob Cameron made a motion to recess the meeting until Tuesday, August 13<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. to continue discussion on lake lowering and calling for a public input session. Commissioner John Kilby seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

  
Michelle Jolley,  
Town Clerk

