

Cordry Sweetwater Conservancy Wake Committee Minutes
September 13, 2023
CSCD Office

**** These minutes are not official until approved by the Wake Commission****

A Parris announced the meeting was being recorded.
These minutes are not meant to be a full transcription.

Present: A. Parris, M. Harper, S. Casey, B. Bowers, S. Leerkamp, J. Robinson

Absent: B. Clancy

Guest/ Freeholders: T. Adolay, C. Brown, T. Kuhn, T. Quill, N. Quill, G. Harper, J. Robinson

Call it order: A. Parris called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM

Agenda Modifications:

-M. Harper wanted to further discuss making a summary of wake survey comments public. Agreed to add that as new business.

Free Holder Concerns: (Limited to 3 mins)

-N. Quill: Concerns regarding this committee and board's responsibility to preserve the integrity of the lakes, taking into account the majority responses from the survey, enforcement of rules, evident erosion of shoreline making sure the dams are not also compromised, recommending banning of wake surfing. See attached complete presentation.

-T. Quill: Did a comprehensive study of our Dam reports from 2015-2021 provided by the CSCD office (for Sweetwater only since 61 of the 64 wake boats are on this lake). He explained how the overall condition of the dam at one time was satisfactory, and in recent years, the overall rating has gone from fair to conditionally poor. The dam was built in the early 60s under the specifications of the Army Corps of Engineers. Per the same, they report a 2' wake has 4x the force of a 1' wake and a 3' wake has 9 x the force of a 1' wake. Our dams were built originally with only the waves from wind and smaller fishing boats. In 2023, we have boats producing wakes 2' to 3' high. To say there is no erosion on the lake and the dams are "fine" is irresponsible. See attached complete presentation.

Approval of Minutes:

-M. Harper asked for the information surrounding the survey results to also include the number of Freeholders that were allowed to take the survey multiple times as discussed in previous wake meetings and a board meeting based on individual ditch taxes they pay. Verbiage was agreed to and included in the official August minutes.

Old Business: Committee Recommendations

-Reviewed the previous recommendations from the August meeting already voted on

-Discussion regarding who made the decision along the way that wake boats were no longer inspected to insure that wake enhancing devices were permanently disabled on every wake boat before receiving a sticker to be allowed on our lakes. There is a list of pre-approved boats regarding those that have been measured and known to meet our length/weight requirements. Certain make and models of wake boats were added to this list in confirmation they met length/weight requirements only. Four past and present security commission members in attendance and none recall a vote being taken from the security commission or the board to no longer require inspections of wake enhancing devices. Only an individual inspection on each wake boat can determine if the wake enhancing devices have been permanently disabled. That has not been done for years.

-Discussion about boats being permanently disabled as the current affidavit says. After much conversation about boats being only temporarily disabled (or not disabled at all) while on our lakes and equipment used elsewhere; the question was asked how hard is it to remove the equipment so it cannot be used at a flip a switch. In the past, a freeholder actually removed equipment and you could see the holes that had been filled in. Other boats may be able to easily require removal of the wedge/surf tab or plate only the hinge remaining on the boat.

-Recommendation: All wake boats would be inspected to ensure compliance for removal or disabling required as in accordance with affidavit signed by boat owner by a representative of the CSCD prior to the issuance new stickers. Motion Robinson, second by Bowers, passed vote 5-1 with Casey dissenting.

-Recommendation: Utilizing ballast tanks, wake shapers, wedge, trim tabs, wakesurf tabs, wakesurf system, set wedge, surf plate, weight added or shifted, or any other device or methodology for the purpose of wake enhancement shall be permanently, disabled and/or banned from use on Cordry and Sweetwater Lakes. This list is not to be considered exclusive. All wave enhancement by the boat owner/operator is banned. Any boat currently on the lakes that has not complied with the removal or disabling required by the affidavit signed granting permission for permitting and use on the lakes, shall be ticketed and ordered not to be allowed back on the lakes until an inspection by a properly authorized person to determine their compliance with the rules established under these provisions. Should there be a second violation of the "no wake enhancements" rule, the boat will be banned from operation on Cordry or Sweetwater Lakes for a period of one year. Should there be a third violation, the boat shall be banned indefinitely. Ticket recommendation for wake boat violation shall not reset every year. Motion by Robinson, second by Bowers, passed 5-1 vote with Casey dissenting.

-Recommendation: Before a Freeholder can receive a permit for a boat, they need to complete a course of instruction, similar to the zebra mussel course, that shows an understanding of the rules and regulations pertaining to boating, skiing, tubing, and swimming, including that the Freeholder is responsible for educating anyone using his/her boat and will be the one suffering the consequences should the boat be operated in violation of a rule or regulation. Motion by Bowers, second by Robinson, passed 6-0 vote.

-Recommendation: Wake surf with current rules in place. Stay near the middle of the lake approximately 400 feet from the shore and dams. Map course to be part of education. Motion by Casey, second by Parris, failed vote 2-4 with Bowers, Harper, Leerkamp and Robinson dissenting.

-Recommendation: If a boat patrol representative is denied a request to board and inspect a boat under reasonable suspicion of breaking any rules governing the use and permitting of boat on Cordry or Sweetwater Lakes, the owner /operator shall be issued a ticket for the perceived violation and a second ticket for the refusal to grant permission to board. In addition, the operator of the boat shall return the boat to its mooring and not be permitted to operate the boat on the water until the issues for which the tickets were issued are resolved. Motion by Harper, second by Robinson passed 4-2 with Casey and Parris dissenting.

New Business:

Harper presented an accumulation list of the most repeated comments made on the Wake Boat Survey to be made public providing more than a just a bar graph available to the community. This gives a broader story of how wake surfing/boats have affected others on the lake. Parris was concerned it was biased and did not have enough positive comments regarding surfing. Robinson reaffirmed Harper's numbers as she also looked at most repeated comments and did not find enough repeated positive comments that raised to the level of those on the list already of anywhere from 26 to 102 repeated similar comments. Motion by Harper, second by Bowers, passed vote 4-2 with Casey and Parris dissenting.

Prior motion rescinded after further discussion regarding insuring total transparency by releasing all the comments from the survey to the public. This removes any perceived bias and the community can see for themselves all positive and negative comments. After insuring any personal identifying information is removed (for which there were only one or two) the comments will be posted on the website alongside the bar graph totals from the survey. Motion by Bowers, second by Harper, passed 4-2 with Casey and Parris dissenting.

Member Concern/ Comments: None

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Leerkamp, second by Robinson at 8:03 PM. Motion passed 6-0

Next Meeting: October 11, 2023, at 6 PM at the CSCS Office

Respectfully Submitted by: Marcia Harper

Nancy Quill Presentation:

- 1) As board and committee members. Your job is to be stewards of the lake. Preserving the integrity of the lake should be foremost and all of your decisions.
- 2) Majority of Freeholders have voiced concerns about safety, erosion and damages, caused by the large Wakes produced by wakesurfing. Your survey results show:
 - 1) 50% ban wake boats
 - 2) 57% ban wakesurfing
 - 3) 64% lakes are more dangerous
 - 4) 73% wake boats are not following rules
 - 5) 72% rules are not being enforced
- 3) Enforcement of current rules: Affidavits are incomplete and not enforced. They were put in place to hold people accountable. According to boat patrol in a recent security meeting, identifying boats with wake enhancing devices and enforcing the current rules is very difficult.
- 4) Erosion is real. It is evident by the many Freeholders who have reinforced there shoreline. We need to be sure the dams are not being compromised by these larger, powerful wakes.

These large wakes are a problem. Until the Conservancy can figure out a better way to enforce or limit large wakes, wakesurfing should be banned.

Tom Quill Presentation:

- Reviewed dam inspection reports from 2015 to 2021 (Sweetwater)
- Overall condition of the dam at one time was satisfactory. The highest rating possible.
- In recent year, the overall rating has gone from fair to conditionally poor. The levels of rating go from satisfactory /fair /conditionally poor /poor /unsatisfactory.
- The upstream slope component of the report, the side facing the water with rip-rap. The upstream rating of the dam on Sweetwater has fallen from good to acceptable. This rating scale is four-point from good / acceptable/deficient /poor.
- The upstream slope of the dam was reported to have areas of erosion in multiple reports. Not my words...in the reports provided by the CSCD Office.
- Also, reported on the upstream slope, is an increased vegetative growth at the waterline. From 2015 to 2021.
- This is evidence that the riprap is being moved or probably being pulled down from larger wakes. Therefore, seeds are reaching the soil behind the rip rap of the dam, sprouting, and growing. If there was no soil behind the rip-rap, the seeds would have nothing to grow from.
- The dam was built in the early 1960s. At that time wave action would have been from the wind and smaller fishing boats.
- The dam was built under the specifications of the Army Corps of Engineers.
- The engineering specs would have outlined the size, weight, and depth of the riprap needed on the upstream side of the dam.
- Can anyone assure me, the existing riprap on the dam, meets the original specs for the size, weight, and depth?
- Now in 2023, with much larger boats on the lake, producing 2 to 3 foot wakes, has anyone consulted with an engineer as to the size, weight and depth of riprap, needed to protect our earthen dam?
- Per Army Corps of Engineers:
 - A 2 foot wake is four times the force of a 1 foot wake
 - A 3 foot wave has nine times the force of a 1 foot wake
- Can anyone assure me these large wakes are not moving the riprap around compromising the integrity of the dam?
- I think to say there's no erosion on this lake and the dams are "fine" is irresponsible.
- I think some kind of study needs to be done to ensure that we are protecting the dam.
- The dam should be the number one priority.
- I think this committee should recommend to the board that a qualified professional should be consulted to make sure these larger wakes are not damaging the dam. And to not do so is irresponsible.