

**MINUTES OF A PUBLIC HEARING
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON
JANUARY 29, 2018**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners held a Public Hearing on January 29, 2018, at 5:55 p.m., Justice & Administration Building, Room A201, 401 Grindstaff Cove Road, Sylva, North Carolina.

Present: Brian McMahan, Chairman
Charles Elders, Vice Chair
Boyce Deitz, Commissioner
Mickey Luker, Commissioner
Ron Mau, Commissioner

Heather C. Baker, County Attorney
Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board

Absent: Don Adams, County Manager

Chairman McMahan called the public hearing to order and stated the purpose was to receive public input concerning a "No Wake Zone" on Glenville Lake for an area that consists of a narrow passage between the mainland and two islands at the north end of the lake.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

(a) Joyce Waterbury of Cullowhee, stated that she was pleased to have brought this issue to the Commissioners last summer. A number of homeowners on Glenville Lake had a concerned about safety hazards that had developed at one passage of the lake. A preliminary consideration of the area by a wildlife officer did not agree with the homeowners' assessment. They submitted their disagreement of the officer's findings to the Board of Commissioners. In the officer's report, he indicated that as of the creation of the report, no incidents, safety concerns or problems had been observed or brought to the attention of the wildlife officers. This should be taken as what it was, a non-judgmental response to a standardized form. It should not be misconstrued because an accident had not yet happened that the safety hazard in the proposed area did not exist. In fact, the neighbors that brought the proposal to the Commissioners were explicitly trying to improve the safety of the area before an accident occurred.

The risky behavior was fairly new over the last three to four years as a direct result from the improvements made to the two boat ramps and the creation of the Pine Creek Recreation Area. The neighbors were collectively supportive of the improved access to the lake, they were trying to ensure it was safe access. They were proposing an easy, inexpensive remedy to the problem with a "no wake zone".

(b) Ray Ferri stated he was a resident and a neighbor on that portion of the lake. The request of the "no wake zone" had always been for safety. The island area was perceived as public land, but was owned by Duke Energy. Because of its proximity, people go back and forth to the island by swimming and boating across the channel. They just wanted to prevent the chance of an accident or possible death.

(c) Tom Drake of Huntersville, stated that boat operators were already legally responsible for safe operations of their boats. There were a lot of places that boats went within 100 yards of the shore all over the lake. He thought it was a slippery slope to start picking out a particular area for safety concerns when the same concerns could exist in areas all over the lake. Also, there was little relationship between speed and wake. Enforcement would be a tremendous issue for wildlife officers.

(d) David Allen stated he was the owner of A-1 Marina. He was very disturbed that the only information that he had gotten was from the newspaper. He did not think there was enough notice to be fair. No one would be coming into town until June so how were they being represented properly. What they needed was education and courtesy on the lake. The swimming areas and boat ramps were marked and designated. He was not against changes, but he thought there would be a snowball effect with a “no wake zone”.

(e) Ray Jimison stated he was a homeowner on Lake Glenville. At the launch ramp, there was a “no wake zone” buoy and probably ten times a day people would speed past the buoy. Putting a buoy in place and a “no wake zone” would not change people’s behaviors. Enforcement was really important as traffic on the lake had doubled or tripled and enforcement was probably half what it was. He thought it was an enforcement and boating awareness issue. It was a difficult issue to deal with.

(f) Diana Hofer stated she was a full-time resident and owned a home for 23 years. She lived around the cove from the area they were speaking about. The boat traffic had increased and safety had gotten much worse. She wanted to make sure everyone understood that the part of the lake they were speaking of was very narrow not a wide gap.

(g) Margaret McRae stated that in 1994 they bought their home on Lake Glenville. On the weekends there was a lot of activity on the two islands. They wanted everyone to enjoy the lake, but safety was their biggest concern.

There being no further public comments, Commissioner Luker moved that the public hearing be adjourned. Commissioner Mau seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

Attest:

Approved:

Angela M. Winchester, Clerk

Brian Thomas McMahan, Chairman