

**NEW JERSEY BOAT REGULATION COMMISSION MEETING**  
**October 27, 2021**  
**Raritan Yacht Club**  
**160 Water Street**  
**Perth Amboy, NJ 08861**

I. **MEMBERS PRESENT**

Acting Chairman Ed Harrison Jr.  
Kenneth Ryan  
Philip Weisbecker Jr.  
Bruce Strigh  
Roland Gehweiler Jr.  
Leonard Mangiaracina

**STAFF**

Sergeant Robert Frake  
DAG Kevin Dronson

NJSP, Marine Services Bureau  
Office of the Attorney General

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

II. **SUNSHINE LAW ANNOUNCEMENT (OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS LAW)**

The meeting was called to order at 10:09 AM by Acting Chairman Ed Harrison Jr., at which time Acting Chairman Ed Harrison Jr. announced that this meeting is being held in compliance with the provisions of Chapter 231, Public Law 1975, known as the Open Public Meetings Act. Notice of this meeting was given by annual notice filed with the Secretary of State, the Department of Law and Public Safety website, the New Jersey State Police website and it was posted at State Police Headquarters, West Trenton, NJ.

III. **MINUTES OF THE PRIOR MEETING**

Minutes from the September Boat Regulation Commission meetings were approved.

IV. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- **Follow up wording for Passenger Regulations on a Personal Water Craft (PWC):**

The Commission formally approved wording from the prior Commission meeting,

this being:

*“No person or persons shall ride between the certified operator and the steering controls of the personal watercraft.”*

Kenneth Ryan addressed the prior discussion pertaining to passengers seated behind the certified operator, with this circumstance being identified as an additional responsibility incumbent upon the certified operator. Sgt. Robert Frake agreed that an unsafely seated passenger could be considered careless operation on the part of the operator, particularly if it involved injury. Sgt. Thomas DiStefano of the New Jersey State Police spoke to his opinion that children becoming casualties due to being seated behind the operator is not a common occurrence. Lt. Christopher Wozniak of the NJSP Marine Services Bureau addressed the inherent safety concern of a small child seated behind the operator. Bruce Strigh looked for clarification on the point where a child passenger on a PWC would be considered unsafe. Lt. Christopher Wozniak addressed the broad spectrum of possible careless operation violations with unsafe seating potentially being considered one of them. Bruce Strigh looked for the specific violation. Kenneth Ryan reminded that speed and unsafe operation for a PWC falls under Careless Operation. Bruce advised that he is now satisfied with the proposed wording. Roland Gehweiler Jr. stressed that age is not a factor because there exists no age restriction for passengers for the purposes of this proposal. The above language was then motioned, seconded and approved by the Commission.

- **NJSP process for Seasonal PFD Wear Rule Change**

Acting Chairman Ed Harrison Jr. mentioned State Police Marine Bureau involvement with moving this particular rule change forward. Sgt. Robert Frake shed some light for the Commission pertaining to the next steps with the legislative process. The Commission was advised of next week’s pending meeting with the New Jersey State Police Research and Legislative Services Unit. All attendees were reminded that once the Commission agrees upon a proposed change to legislation that it must go through additional channels within Law and Public Safety and the State of New Jersey.

## V. NEW BUSINESS

- **Helmet Wear for Personal Watercraft Use**

The need for new helmet laws was presented in public forum amongst the Commission and all attendees. No person in attendance spoke for any current need for this addition to law. The subject was closed at this time.

- **Working with the National Safe Boating Council for PFD Wear**

Acting Chairman Ed Harrison Jr. mentioned the National Safe Boating Council regarding Personal Flotation Device outreach, and also mentioned the Boat U.S. PFD loaner campaign. Kenneth Ryan addressed the Commission to advise them of existing NJSP Marine Services Bureau outreach campaigns for stressing the importance for PFD wear for the public. The NJSP has an existing conduit for that. Kenneth Ryan stated that the Marine Services Bureau works with our Public Information Unit in order to put that safety message out there, specifically targeting the three big recreational boating season holidays. He additionally highlighted NJSP cold water survival for early season boating. Lt. Christopher Wozniak of the NJSP mentioned that the Marine Services Bureau is always willing to hand out PFD's to the public if and when the need arises. Philip Weisbecker Jr. asked if the non-tidal lakes get visited for this outreach. Lt. Christopher Wozniak replied to the affirmative for outreach to the lakes, following that up with the goal of Marine Services is always to continue further outreach. Philip Weisbecker Jr. mentioned Greenwood Lake specifically, and for a need for safety outreach. Leonard Mangiaracina asked if the Marine Trades can work with their contacts to hand out life jackets with the boats. Roland Gehweiler Jr. stated that safety equipment does get included with the boat sales, and also mentioned that posters are used for outreach. Sgt. Robert Frake mentioned the NJSP's 'Kids Don't Float' campaign, where this past spring the boxes were resupplied by Troopers for PFD handouts. Lt. Christopher Wozniak stated that Troopers spent their own time building those PFD boxes.

- **Discuss and Approve 2022 Schedule**

Sgt. Robert Frake, as administrative agent for the Commission, mentioned that he had contacted all prior venues from 2021 for continuity. All venues had responded to the affirmative although Bordentown Yacht Club needed to wait until their early November meeting to formally approve it. The 2022 schedule was agreed by the Commission as follows:

Bordentown Yacht Club: Approval remains pending.

Ocean City Yacht Club: Wednesday, March 9, 2022

Spray Beach Yacht Club: Wednesday, May 11, 2022

Lake Hopatcong Yacht Club: Wednesday, July 13, 2022

Toms River Yacht Club: Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Raritan Yacht Club: Wednesday, October 26, 2022

## VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

Marty Kane spoke up under public comment, and mentioned having great collaboration

with the New Jersey State Police on Lake Hopatcong. He mentioned how the Park Police also become part of the Sheriff's Office. He stated that the gentlemen in this room led to a successful summer. He stated that the Lake was heavily crowded on the weekends, and the fact that there are not more public complaints shows a lot of progress. Marty Kane continued by stating that the Lake Hopatcong Commission works with the group in a collaborative effort, and also said good fences make better neighbors. He advised of progress with meeting with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection quarterly for lake matters, which has been working well. He said it has also been easier to communicate about aids to navigation. Marty Kane mentioned the Coalition of Lakes Association, and its focus on mandatory dues. He then mentioned what was accomplished with getting the public lakes together to discuss various Lake issues. Marty Kane spoke of appreciation for increased spending in State budget for public lakes in the state, including work done pertaining to invasive species, algae blooms, and storm water management. Marty Kane stated that this is a first regarding funding for the Lakes, and mentioned bipartisan support politically. He advised that the public lakes association has been working well. He then expressed a desire to just try to keep all the Lakes together, and expressed thanks for the support. He invited the Commission back to Lake Hopatcong next year. Bruce Strigh complimented Marty Kane on the local enforcement, and getting local agencies involved. It was agreed that although there is a shortage of patrol boats, the local agency involvement is important. Marty Kane mentioned that it's a handful of people who complain.

#### VII. EXPRESSION OF APPRECIATION

Leonard Mangiaracina expressed appreciation for Sgt. Robert Frake pertaining to the administrative duties performed for the Commission.

Acting Chairman Ed Harrison Jr. expressed his appreciation to the providers of the facility.

#### VIII. AGENDA FOR THE NEXT MEETING

Kenneth Ryan mentioned that the Commission has made nice headway with the proposed mandatory seasonal wear of the PFD's in addition to the proposal for PWC passenger requirements, and proposed to continue moving current projects forward through the system to bring them to fruition. Kenneth Ryan advised that no kids being allowed to be in front of a PWC operator would be a big deal, and suggested moving the current existing topics along as the number one priority. Kenneth Ryan, with regards to the Marine Services Bureau, emphasized the importance of relationships with other agencies, being out and involved with the communities, and going to boat safety courses to inspect

the integrity of the classes. Kenneth Ryan advised that the Marine Services Bureau touches every aspect of the waters of New Jersey, and stated that PFD wear has been pushed for years via the use of social media and other means.

Philip Weisbecker Jr. proposed having future Boat Regulation Commission Meetings on the Hudson River. Kenneth Ryan was in agreement and stated that we could potentially ask our Waterway partners for a venue for future meetings, as the Hudson River would be an extremely relevant area of discussion. Kenneth Ryan mentioned that there are a multitude of partners in that region. Lt. Christopher Wozniak of the Marine Services Bureau advised that it would be prudent to look for a venue in that region.

Lt. Christopher Wozniak addressed local concerns as opposed to the transient boating community. Kenneth Ryan advised PWC's are approximately 20% of registered vessels in New Jersey, but PWC complaints are a disproportionately large part of complaints on the water. PWC speed was addressed by the Commission in general as being hazardous. Lt. Christopher Wozniak advised that they have identified riding groups which are similar to gangs on the water at times. Roland Gehweiler Jr. addressed his opinion that the PWC groups are a force out there. Marty Kane of the public stated that PWC use at night has become a problem at the Lake. Roland Gehweiler Jr. brought motorized surfboards to the Commissions attention.

Acting Chairman Ed Harrison Jr. proposed Gloucester County for a potential new Commission meeting location. Lt. Christopher Wozniak stated that issues have been diminishing in that region. Kenneth Ryan agreed that issues there are minimal as of late. Kenneth Ryan advised that the State Police monitors that activity.

IX. **DATE, TIME AND LOCATION OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next Boat Regulation Commission meeting for January 2022 is not yet officially approved. Once approved, it will be posted publicly on the New Jersey State Police website, [www.njsp.org](http://www.njsp.org), under Public Information, Marine Services, New Jersey Boat Regulation Commission Annual Schedule of Meetings. The meeting is tentatively scheduled for 10:00AM, Wednesday, January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at Bordentown Yacht Club, 1 Farnsworth Avenue, Bordentown, NJ 08505.

X. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned via motion at 11:00am by attending members.