

**NOTICE TO RESIDENTS  
TOWN OF CRESCENT  
MINUTES FOR ENHANCED WAKEBOAT AD HOC COMMITTEE MEETING  
THURSDAY, MARCH 13, 2025 AT 6:00 P.M.**

**Committee Members Present:** Kyla Waksmonski, Marj Mehring, Jack Bertram, Stephanie Harrelson, Mike Henry, Todd Hehli, Chris Corr (Zoom)

**Committee Members Absent:** Dave Hollands

**Call to Order:** Supervisor Waksmonski called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. at the Crescent Town Hall.

**Approval of Agenda:** Waksmonski proposed moving the public comment up to follow the approval of the February 24, 2025 minutes given the nature of the agenda items. Motion by Henry to move the public comment to follow the approval of the minutes. Seconded by Hehli. All aye. Motion carried. Motion by Mehring to approve the amended agenda. Seconded by Henry.

**Approval of Minutes:** Henry would like to update Mark Markee's comment to include "Squash Lake water was high." Motion by Harrelson to approve the minutes from the Enhanced Wake Ad Hoc Committee Meeting of February 24, 2025. Seconded by Henry. All aye. Motion carried.

**Fifteen Minutes of Public Comment:**

- Terry Goldbach, Crescent Lake - Not anti-wakeboat, but pro-lake. Observes waves damaging shorelines and suggests banning new wakeboat permits while grandfathering existing owners through a registration system.
- Dan Mehring, Squash Lake - Pro-lake protection. Notes increased debris in his bay, the most in 20 years. Supports grandfathering idea, fears visiting boats overwhelming the lake, and believes damage could take decades to restore.
- Jim Solinski, Crescent Lake - Has seen more shoreline erosion in the last three years than in the previous 12. Floating weeds have increased year-round. Wants at least restrictions and signage, noting waves have overtaken his pontoon from 200 yards away.
- Tim Kilgore, Crescent Lake District - Lake district has focused on AIS but acknowledges wakeboat concerns. Believes the 200-foot distance rule is inadequate, citing waves slamming docks and yards at that distance.
- Mark Markee, Squash Lake - Suggests restricting wakeboats to the deeper section of the lake rather than the smaller area near the boat landing, where they currently concentrate.
- Lori Markee, Squash Lake - Observes shoreline damage in the bay near the boat landing, with residents resorting to sandbags, unlike the deeper section near Hwy 8.
- Jerry Barnet, Squash Lake - Does not oppose wakeboats but opposes wake surfing with ballasts due to the large waves. Concerned about safety for smaller watercraft and prioritizing lake residents over a small number of wake surfers.
- Joe Fazzio, Squash Lake - Questions whether wakeboats are the real issue, as invasive species and waves from other boats have long existed. Believes responsible boating is key, not restrictions. Argues that his wakeboat's impact is minimal and is concerned about infringing on rights.

**Discuss and Determine Next Steps:** Mehring polled the group and three wake surf and three do not. Harrelson stated that she cared about the science. Corr wanted to correct the mention of a survey. The actual question was "are you in favor of restrictions for enhanced wakes?" He is concerned that conceptually, things have moved from restrict to abolish. Believes sentiment from survey takers would be different if the original question was clarified. Henry stated that he was concerned about Dave Hollands and lack of original representation from Pelican.

Harrelson discussed the original problem - what restrictions make sense that do not infringe on wakeboats unfairly? She stated that it is important to accommodate lake users and also consider shore erosion, bottom disruption, and

invasive species. Merhing stated that boats have changed significantly since the original rule about 100 feet from shore. Harrelson has concerns about some of the data in the research and believes it is important to develop a compromise with the public. She also reminded the group this can always be re-evaluated. Henry stated that he believes the compromise is that people that have wakeboats can still operate them. Henry is concerned about the fish population and if considering people's rights, there are a lot more fisherman. He believes wakeboats should not have the ballasts filled and was concerned that people grandfathered in – the lake bottom does not recognize if it's local or not. Hehli stated he could not find any study that suggests banning wakeboat. He believes that there should be regulations, but does not agree to a ban. Bertram stated that the group has looked through pretty much every single study that's available. He shared that there is not a single study that wakeboats are the sole cause of the damage and AIS to lakes and thinks it's irresponsible to ban a wakeboat. Corr shared the Michigan recommendation was outreach and education as the outcome. He believes it is important to have an education plan at boat landings would be to educate the public. No one should operate a boat without a clear visual. Every boat driver should be aware of safety concern. Waksmonski made a motion to consider an ordinance recommendation to the Town Board. Henry seconded. Roll call vote followed. Harrelson – aye. Henry – aye. Hehli – aye. Bertram – aye. Merhing – aye. Corr – aye. Motion carries.

The group resumed discussion of an ordinance recommendation. Mehring stated she is concerned about the difficulty in telling how far a boat is from shore and how enforcement is handled. She believes it is easier to enforce the use of ballasts. Harrelson stated concern that just doing an advisory would bring people from other lakes that are prohibiting the use of them and bringing them to lakes allowing enhanced wakes. She appreciated the idea of grandfathering. Bertram stated that he believes that something needs to happen at all of the boat launches. It is difficult to know what the rules are at each of the lakes. He has connections to the Wisconsin Water Sports Coalition that can perhaps do signage that includes borders and information about where people can have an enhanced wake on a lake. Henry discussed the County resolution of 500 feet and 20 feet depth and also shared the WI Conservation Congress 2024 survey – Oneida County residents 75% voted in favor of restrictions. He is concerned that if we don't do something, we will be a magnet and that currently, right now Crescent Lake continues to battle milfoil and some type of snail. Harrelson reminded the group that the research states that waves dissipate differently in depth of water. She is open to having each lake have their own location where enhanced wakes are allowable. She believes 15 -16 feet of depth is sufficient. She remains concerned about people coming to lakes where enhanced wakes are permitted as more bans of enhanced wakes go into effect. Corr stated that he believes that an ordinance would be deterrent enough because they wouldn't want to be worried about the distance. He cited that the group needs to determine the limitations of the ordinance so it can be enforced, if necessary. Bertram shared that the problem he sees with a home lake rule is that someone may not be able to tell if someone not living on the lake is using a ballast or may be confused that someone is or is not using the ballast. Dan Butkus shared that the home lake rule is an AIS issue and it's just a concept. He stated the Town of Newbold prohibits the bow up, enhanced wake mode of operating on their lakes. Butkus also shared that enforcement can be an issue, but these ordinance are really looking at influencing social norms and changing attitudes. He suggested not focusing on home lake rule.

Corr put forth a motion recommend to the board that an ordinance be developed to restrict enhanced wakes to water that is at least 15 feet deep and at least 300 feet from shore. Harrelson seconded. Waksmonski called for a roll call vote. Harrelson – aye. Henry – no. Hehli – aye. Bertram – aye. Mehring – no. Corr – aye. Waksmonski summarized that there were four ayes and two no votes so the motion carries for the recommendation to the board.

Henry shared his concern about the membership of the committee. It was composed of eight members, three of them own wakeboats. He stated that from beginning, the committee was set up heavily biased toward not regulating enhanced wakes and believes it does not reflect the sentiments of the community.

Bertram stated that he does not own a wakeboat. His goal was to protect area lakes. Henry stated he believed others were willing to serve on the committee who reflected the larger sentiment and they were not appointed to the committee. It was not composed in a way that could not do service to the Town Board.

Corr stated that he believes that this distance is what other boats at 100 feet from shore parallel. Merhing stated she thinks that 500 feet and 20 feet deep is more protective to the lake. Bertram stated those recommendations would not allow anyone to use enhanced wakes on Lake Julia. Harrelson cited research from Goudey. Based on aggregate data she believes 300 feet and 15 feet for depth are adequate for Lake Julia. Bertram reminded the group that the

launches are all in Crescent and signage for education would be ideal. Mehring reiterated that she thinks that 500 feet from shore is required. Henry stated that he continues to recommend ordinances similar to Newbold and Lake Tomahawk and thinks anything else is putting a bandaid on a problem that's an arterial bleed and not going to serve any meaningful purpose.

**As Applicable, Workshop Next Steps:** Waksmonski stated that she would be recommending the outcome of the ad hoc committee to the next to Town Board meeting. After brief discussion, Harrelson made a motion to let the Town Board consider the distance from shore as it relates to distance from docks and other boats. Henry seconded. All approved. Motion carried.

Butkus commended the group for meetings and the group sorting through the information. He thought the group did an excellent job.

Waksmonski adjourned the meeting at 7:57.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kyla Waksmonski  
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