Park Township Board of Trustees

June 25, 2020
6:30 p.m.

SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

(Please turn off or set to “silent” mode all cell phones and other electronic devices.)

1. Call to order

2. Approval of Agenda

3. Public Comment (This is an opportunity for the public to address the Board and to make any appropriate comments. Please limit your comments to 2 – 3 minutes per person.)

4. Action Items:
   a) Accept the two DNR slow-no wake recommendations; 1) changing the Narrows to slow-no wake for all vessels and 2) slow-no wake 300 feet from shore or dock within the entirety of Lake Macatawa.
   b) Appeal DNR for additional slow-no wake changes.

5. Board Comments and Committee/Agency Reports

6. Adjourn

*NOTE: Public comment may be accepted at the time the Board is considering agenda items marked with *
VIA EMAIL

Skip Keeter, Park Township Clerk

Dear Mr. Keeter:

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has, as requested by resolution from the Park Township Board, investigated the need for a temporary watercraft control ordinance. This included a review of documentation provided by the township and a field investigation.

Based on the review of the application, other documents, and the field investigation the DNR finds that conditions exist that support the need for a temporary watercraft control ordinance, as established under Part 801, Marine Safety, Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended (NREPA), specifically MCL 324.80112a.

Three local municipalities with jurisdiction on Lake Macatawa requested the need for temporary controls. To ensure both, the compatible use of the waterways and that a boat operator may pass unhindered from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, the DNR Law Enforcement Division recommends consistent temporary watercraft control ordinances within all three municipalities. These controls will reduce all vessel traffic speed to no greater than a slow-no wake speed for a period of six months in the following areas of Park Township:

(a) 300 feet from any shore, dock or pierhead, and
(b) in the area defined as the Narrows.

Attached is a copy of the proposed temporary watercraft controls for the waters of Lake Macatawa within the jurisdiction of Park Township. Under NREPA, the proposed temporary watercraft control ordinances take effect when both of the following requirements are met, which must occur within 30 days after receipt of this letter by the township:

(a) The township adopts the temporary watercraft control as an ordinance at a public meeting.
(b) The township notifies the department of the adoption.
LAKE MACATAWA, PARK TOWNSHIP, - TWC 70-20-002 - Temporary Slow-No Wake

On the waters of Lake Macatawa, Park township, Ottawa county, it is unlawful for the operator of a vessel to exceed a slow-no wake speed within 300 feet of any shore, dock or pierhead.

“Slow-no wake speed” means a very slow speed whereby the wake or wash created by the vessel would be minimal.

All existing watercraft controls in Park township shall remain in effect in addition to this control.

This TWC shall expire six months from the effective date of this control.

The boundaries of the area described above shall be marked with signs and/or with buoys at all points of public entry. It is the responsibility of Park township to provide, place and maintain all signage, including any buoys, to notify boaters of this TWC. This includes all public access sites within the area described above. All buoys must be placed as provided in a permit issued by the Department of Natural Resources and be in conformance with Michigan’s approved Uniform Waterway Marking System. Buoys shall not be placed in a commercial shipping channel. This TWC is only enforceable when properly marked.

History Eff. Date: MM/DD/YEAR

Exp. Date: MM/DD/YEAR
On the waters of Lake Macatawa, known as the "Narrows", on that portion bound to the west by longitudinal line 86° 10' 0.76"W, (-86.16688) and to the east by longitudinal line, 86° 9' 110"W, (-86.15447) within Section 35 of Park township, Ottawa county, it is unlawful for the operator of a vessel to exceed a slow-no wake speed.

“Slow-no wake speed” means a very slow speed whereby the wake or wash created by the vessel would be minimal.

The longitudinal line, 86° 10' 0.76" W, (-86.16688) is approximated by extending Old Orchard road (city of Holland) north to the northern shore.

The longitudinal line, 86° 9' 16.110"W, (-86.15447) can be approximated by extending a line south from the navigational aid, Point Superior Light 7, to the southern township boundary.

This temporary local watercraft control (TWC) supersedes the current watercraft control, WC-70-16-002 and shall expire six months from the effective date of this control.

The boundaries of the area described above shall be marked with signs and/or with buoys at all points of public entry. It is the responsibility of Park township to provide, place and maintain all signage, including any buoys, to notify boaters of this TWC. This includes all public access sites within the area described above. All buoys must be placed as provided in a permit issued by the Department of Natural Resources and be in conformance with Michigan’s approved Uniform Waterway Marking System. Buoys shall not be placed in a commercial shipping channel. This TWC is only enforceable when properly marked.


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June 25, 2020

Daniel Eichinger, Director
Department of Natural Resources
525 W. Allegan Street
Lansing, MI 48933

Dear Daniel Eichinger,

Let us first take this opportunity to thank the Department of Natural Resources and the State Legislature for enacting a temporary control ordinance to allow for short term changes to slow-no wake rules given the significant high water levels in Lake Macatawa.

As you may be aware the Department of Natural Resources enforcement division has recommended that the slow-no wake in the area known as the Narrows be expanded to include all vessels. The Township is in support of that decision. We are also in support of the change of a slow-no wake from 100 feet off of shore to the recommend 300 feet of shore and or docks throughout the entirety of Lake Macatawa.

Park Township additionally requested that the area known as Macatawa Bay slow-no wake be expanded to approximately 168th Street on the north side and Saunders Avenue to the south. Please allow us to explain our reasoning in appealing DNR decision not to expand the no wake zone in this area.

Macatawa Bay sees one of the most significant concentration of boating in Lake Macatawa, as it is home to multiple marinas, larger condo developments and resort areas. It is also the area that funnels into Lake Michigan, causing a high volume of boating traffic. Many residents in this area have requested a no wake expansion. In fact, it is this area that was the Townships main impetus for requesting the temporary no wake changes initially. We understand the desire to balance compatible use of the lake with no wake restrictions, but respectfully request this area be reconsidered for a no wake expansion.

Also, as you may already know, this area had been considered for a permanent no wake expansion previously. We would very much like to evaluate the effectiveness of a no wake expansion in this area over the next 6 months and determine if it has a general positive or negative affect; while balancing the compatible use of Lake Macatawa with protection of property along the shore line. This will help inform us of any permanent changes requested in the future.

Sincerely,

Park Township Board of Trustees

cc: F/Lt. Thomas R. Wanless
    Kelly Snyder