

Membership meeting minutes  
May 1, 2024

Attendees: 35

Attendees: Jeff Zimmer, Eric Wooster, Lewis Mustian, Bob Allan, Jane Stringer, Brian Goldsworthy, Patricia Price, Daniel 'Scooter' Boham,  
Executive Director: Tammy Clarke

Jeff called the meeting to order at 9:30 am. and welcomed everyone.

Jeff provided a few updates:

- Mecklenburg county Listening event. Tomorrow night, May 2nd
- Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup>:
  - Jack Saunders annual shred event, start at 10 to 1
  - QWAC bridge and back start at 9:00 Chamber
- Environment Committee is working on the lake aquatic cage project in June.
- The Lake Clean up committee has clean-up kits at the Chamber of Commerce for groups that want to pick up trash.
- May 6<sup>th</sup> Warren County public meeting to discuss defunding of fire departments in Warren County to fund #4 EM station, Farmers market, and senior center. LGA has posted a position statement on this proposal on a website and provided it to Warren County.

Jeff introduced today's speakers and asked for phones to be placed on mute and to hold questions until end.

Panelist:

- Crystal Dickens, Point Realty Group Brunswick County
- Barney Watson, Lake Gaston Real Estate, Warren County
- Chad Barbour, Lake Gaston Properties. Mecklenburg County

Jeff began with questions for the panelists starting at the National level, moving to the local level and short-term rentals. Each panelist had the opportunity to respond. The Questions and Answers were very enlightening and helpful. For more detailed information please watch the YouTube video.

Question: Recently the National Association of Realtors (NAR) settled a lawsuit that addressed commissions. Can you explain what happened and what has been settled or agreed upon?

Answer: Crystal: Antitrust lawsuit was based on commission payments to the buyer's agent. The suit was sighted as price fixing the commission. NAR settled because they believed they would lose in appeal. There were 8 jurors with over 80 interviewed. Impact: 1) MLS will not advertise commission in MLS for buyer's agent and 2) buyers must have a written agreement with the buyers to view homes. Some of which VA has been doing. The buyer's agents are needed in the Lake Gaston region. Rates are not getting cut. The way the commissions are negotiated, and advertising commission rates is changing. See Fact.Realtor for more information.

Barney: The settlement is not final, and he provided a few more clarifications.

Question: Will settlement impact home value?

Answer: Chad: No. How we do our business will change.

Crystal: These changes will happen in mid-July. Do we need to do anything right now? No, there is a 60-day period to abide by the new rules. Buyers' agents can't advertise they will work for free.

Question: What do you see as changes to the overall market on national elevate?

Answer: Chad: Here in LG it is a supply and demand situation. Covid lock down created a big demand at LG. Here there is a lot more demand than supply. Properties at LG are not at the high level of demand as they were during COVID.

Barney: Provided current market prospective and numbers on housing in 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2020 compared to 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2024 with percentage of increases. Housing supply is down and the market has not stabilized. Anything that hits the market at less than 1 million is moving.

Crystal:

Question: Who are you seeing as a typical buyer?

Crystal: It depends on the county. Baby Boomer spending in our markets. People moving from CA are younger. Seeing Baby Boomer and buyers 35 to 45 with the ability to rent, if in case lifestyle change. They are looking for deep water, great views, pools, garages with amenities. Local economics is how we have full time residences.

Chad:

Question: Do you see a change to part-time residence.

Chad: Has seen buyers buy condo in Raleigh or city and move to lake full time. The Internet is key for working from home.

Question: Short term Rentals buyers what type of questions do they care about their neighbors?

Answer: Chad: Buyers do ask about impact on neighbors. Buyers want to have the ability to be able to rent.

Barney: It's not what it was like 10 years ago, buyers did not care. Now buyers care about neighbors and want renters that will take care of the home. It is good for resell value to have the ability to rent.

Chad: Septic is looked at closely on rental property.

Question: Do you feel that home buyers understand about local attributes and specific issues related to Lake Gaston?

Answer: Crystal: buyers are not that knowledgeable about lake management but are willing to learn. Realtors need to do a better job of education. The lake shoreline has been a hands-off and that falls under Dominion's rules and regs. Because of the increase in price, buyers are more critical and ask more questions. Seeing individual buyers purchasing property, not corporations or individuals with money buying large blocks of property.

Barney: With potential buyers he reviews Dominion information and clarify who owns shoreline, it Dominion.

Chad: Every lot is different, need a survey to know where the high-water mark is.

Question: Is there a role the LGA can play to educate new buyers and current owners? Suggestions?

Answers: Barney: Education is a need. There was a program where new homeowners received a free LGA membership for a year. Jeff: Program was cancelled because after a year LGA would contact owners and they didn't know who or what the LGA was.

Barney: Put information on social media.

Chad: Having the meetings recorded is a big plus. Majority of people care about the lake.

Crystal: A program or brochure of "What you need to know about LG" in partnership with realtor. Realtors need to establish LGA as a resource for new homeowners.

#### **Audience questions:**

Question: Few years out, what will the home pricing be for LG?

Answers:

Barney: same as it is now for LG. Pricing may increase.

Crystal: look outside Raleigh, it has grown 80%. Richmond has grown but not as much as Raleigh. S-line project which will cross the lake, 10 or 15 years which should increase demand.

Chad: Mecklenburg county has Microsoft Data center 3000 contractors on ground with 10 to 15 years of land to build out. Microsoft data center is the largest in the world. This has greatly increased rents due to supply and demand.

Question: Short term rentals (STR) and issues impacting full time residence: Where do you see STR mkt going in the future? Occupancy limit with bedroom and septic impact?

Crystal: Zoning permits required by County will causes checking of septic systems. It's a double edge sword, people to help drive businesses.

Barney: Real Estate commission is over Real Estate agent not VRBO. Zoning is important.

Questions: Agreeing to an 80mil settlement article. Why do the buyer's agent need to know what the commission is? How do I know as a seller that buyer is representing properly?

Crystal: Buyer agent needs to know what their compensation will be for representing the buyer.

With the new settlement Seller can negotiate the buyer's agent commission.

Question: What are Realtors doing to promote business, schools, etc.

Barney: Septic system deters new commercial growth. Internet is much better. EMC/EMS is county related and funding not Realtors.

Questions: What can we do in HOAs to handle STR?

Crystal: Have communications within your community and educate renters of the HOA's rules and regulations. Overturning STR is not an option.

Barney: contact and make homeowners aware of rules and regulations.

Chad: Had been President of HOA, need an attorney to review any changes.

Crystal: See if zoning permits are required at the county level. Have a forum with HOA representatives.

Chad: vacationers do drive new businesses. Businesses have 16 weeks to make money here at the lake. From mid-October to mid-March lake is dead.

Jeff thanked the panelist and members/attendees.

Meeting ended at 11:10 pm ET