

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2001**

**SESSION LAW 2001-356
HOUSE BILL 1052**

AN ACT DEFINING AND REGULATING LOW-SPEED VEHICLES AND OTHERS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 20-4.01 reads as rewritten:

"§ 20-4.01. Definitions.

Unless the context requires otherwise, the following definitions apply throughout this Chapter to the defined words and phrases and their cognates:

- ...
(12a) Golf Cart. – A vehicle designed and manufactured for operation on a golf course for sporting or recreational purposes and that is not capable of exceeding speeds of 20 miles per hour.
- (12a)(12b) Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR). – The value specified by the manufacturer as the maximum loaded weight of a vehicle. The GVWR of a combination vehicle is the GVWR of the power unit plus the GVWR of the towed unit or units. When a vehicle is determined by an enforcement officer to be structurally altered from the manufacturer's original design, the license weight or the total weight of the vehicle or combination of vehicles may be deemed as the GVWR for the purpose of enforcing this Chapter.
- (12b)(12c) Hazardous Materials. – Materials designated as hazardous by the United States Secretary of Transportation under 49 U.S.C. § 1803.
- ...
(48c) Utility Vehicle. – Vehicle designed and manufactured for general maintenance, security, recreational, and landscaping purposes, but does not include vehicles designed and used primarily for the transportation of persons or property on a street or highway."

SECTION 2. G.S. 20-4.01(27) is amended by adding a new sub-subdivision

to read:

"(27) Passenger Vehicles. –

- ...
h. Low-speed vehicle. A four-wheeled electric vehicle whose top speed is greater than 20 miles per hour but less than 25 miles per hour."

SECTION 3. G.S. 20-54 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

"(8) The vehicle is a golf cart or utility vehicle."

SECTION 4. G.S. 20-87 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

"(12) Low-Speed Vehicles. – The fee for a low-speed vehicle is the same as the fee for private passenger vehicles of not more than 15 passengers."

SECTION 5. Chapter 20 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 20-121.1. Operation of a low-speed vehicle on certain roadways.

The operation of a low-speed vehicle is authorized with the following restrictions:

- (1) A low-speed vehicle may be operated only on streets and highways where the posted speed limit is 35 miles per hour or less. This does not

prohibit a low-speed vehicle from crossing a road or street at an intersection where the road or street being crossed has a posted speed limit of more than 35 miles per hour.

- (2) A low-speed vehicle shall be equipped with headlamps, stop lamps, turn signal lamps, tail lamps, reflex reflectors, parking brakes, rearview mirrors, windshields, windshield wipers, speedometer, seat belts, and a vehicle identification number.
- (3) A low-speed vehicle shall be registered and insured in accordance with G.S. 20-50 and G.S. 20-309.
- (4) The Department of Transportation may prohibit the operation of low-speed vehicles on any road or highway if it determines that the prohibition is necessary in the interest of safety.
- (5) Low-speed vehicles must comply with the safety standards in 49 C.F.R. § 571.500."

SECTION 6. Notwithstanding the provisions of G.S. 20-50 and G.S. 20-54, the Town of Lake Waccamaw may, by ordinance, regulate the operation of electric golf carts on any public street or road within the Town that is located south of N.C. 214.

By ordinance, the Town may require the registration of golf carts, charge a fee for the registration, specify the persons authorized to operate golf carts, and specify required equipment, load limits, and the hours and methods of operation of the golf carts.

SECTION 7. This act becomes effective August 1, 2001.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 1st day of August, 2001.

s/ Beverly E. Perdue
President of the Senate

s/ James B. Black
Speaker of the House of Representatives

s/ Michael F. Easley
Governor

Approved 11:42 a.m. this 10th day of August, 2001