

## OCRA Board Meeting Minutes – April 25, 2023

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**Board Meeting Attendees** – Bruce (N1LN), Dan (KR4UB), John (KX4P), Aurora (KN4VXB), Chris (KY4OU), Bill (N8BR), Dave (W4SAR), Karen (KD4YJZ), Lenore (KF4PAB), Dee (KU4GC), and Laurie (N1YXU)

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The meeting minutes from the March BOD Meeting were approved after one misspelling was corrected.

The meeting minutes from the April Membership Meeting were approved.

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### **Discussion Topics:**

- TS450 SAT Update – Bruce
  - Steve Jackson (KZ1X) had received approval from the club to sell the transceiver. John and Bruce tested the unit and came to the conclusion that it really doesn't work.
  - The transceiver has been given back to Steve. He will be sending his donation to the club via PayPal. He will either fix the transceiver or take it apart and sell the pieces. This topic is now closed.
- Next Steps for the Air Filtration at the Membership Meetings – All
  - There was quite a bit of discussion on this topic at our March BOD Meeting which was evident in the meeting minutes.
  - We need to ensure that we are all on the same page in terms of where we are on this subject and agree on the next steps.
  - Dan will do research to find installation documentation and the CFM requirements are for the meeting room. That information will inform how high up the MERV rating curve we can go for filters. Dan will send an email to the BOD members with his findings.
  - When we have more definitive information, we will share the update at an upcoming OCRA Membership meeting.
- Programs Update – John and Bill
  - Given the programs that have been discussed and those that have been committed to by the presenters, we appear to be in good shape for the next few months.
  - Dave (W4SAR) will provide preliminary plans for Field Day at the May 8 OCRA Membership meeting. He will focus on getting feedback from the membership, including band captains from prior years, regarding the number of stations that will be feasible to set-up. The size of the operation will be adjusted to fit the commitment from the group. In addition to the stations that will be on-the-air, Dave will remind everyone of the other key responsibilities that are necessary to have key leaders in order for the event to be successful. Note that Bruce will bring the updated OCRA laptops to the June Membership meeting and give them to Dave. These laptops have been used in the past for the Field Day events.

- Also, at the May Membership meeting, Charles (KY4HU) will give a presentation related to ChatGPT.
- Dave will also lead the final Field Day discussion and preparations as the focus of the June 12 OCRA Membership meeting.
- Currently, the topic for the July OCRA Membership meeting is open.
- Dave (W4SAR) has volunteered to do a presentation on drones, with a demonstration, later in the summer, likely in August.
- John (KX4P) has volunteered to do a presentation relating to the SX-88 that he restored. That presentation could be on the slate for early fall, likely in September.
- John is working on finding a presenter on an astronomy topic. He has friends who are very involved in this topic who might be good candidates to present at an upcoming meeting.
- Repeater Reachability Testing – Bruce
  - There was a good discussion on this topic at the April OCRA Membership meeting.
  - Bruce is going to send another suggestion for everyone to use the procedure that Dan has put together. He will remind folks to complete the testing for their stations and to provide the results. Alternatively, people can respond that they would like to be part of another organized test where the results will be compiled during the testing.
  - Hams in any of our local counties (Orange, Durham, Chatham) are encouraged to participate in this testing. The more information we have, the better understanding of repeater reachability will be achieved. Bruce indicated that he would be happy to host Thursday evening testing session with a group from Durham county. Dee will bring that suggestion back to DFMA membership.
  - Dee indicated that the testing had been discussed during a recent DFMA Thursday night net. There were no specific plans yet established for follow-up.
- Repeater Activities – Dan
  - Repeater related work priorities are primarily being driven by Steve Ahlbom's (W3AHL) departure schedule. Based on current plans that Steve has, the likely timing of when he will be leaving our area is the end of June. Based on that timing, there are items that we need to focus on to ensure there is cross-training and knowledge transfer before Steve leaves.
  - Dan and Ed (W4AEN) have been focused on ensuring they will be able to complete the repeater mapping and associated documentation.
  - Steve has also gifted the club with a laboratory grade spectrum analyzer. Learning to use the equipment will involve three to four half days of training. In order to have meaningful training, the spare repeater build needs to get underway.
  - Dan would like to have regular work sessions, starting at the beginning of May, to focus on the spare repeater build. The group who will do this work include - Paul (N2XZF), Ed (W4AEN), Mike (KN4ZHP), John (N4SJW), and Dan.

- In addition, Dan has recently had a long conversation with Charlie Durst (NC4CD) on two specific topics – Steve Alhom’s (W3AHL) 50’ tower and the longevity of the Fire Tower site.
  - Due to financial reasons, the Chatham County Fire Tower site may be shut down. That could result in the need to move equipment to sites that are at lower elevations. The topographical mapping that is underway becomes even more important in this situation to identify the best locations for the repeaters. This work will also help inform the best place to put the spare repeater that will be built to ensure there is coverage benefit to Orange County.
  - Dan would like to complete a topographic analysis for what is called “Gibb’s Lane”, east of Hillsborough, which is owned by Charlie. It has a ground elevation of 735’ and has a 140’ tower with a DB 420 antenna. The total elevation is 875’, which might provide a place for a repeater and, as a result, additional coverage for us. The topographic analysis will help us understand if this location might help cover the southern part of Orange County.
  - Bruce commented that Ian Fowler (Orange County EOC) owes information on the locations, altitudes of the bases, and heights of the towers the EOC has that might be able to be used for a repeater location. Bruce will follow-up with Ian to get a status on that deliverable.
  - Steve will not be taking his tower trailer (tower, antenna, and rotor) with him to New Mexico. Based on a recent conversation, it appears that Steve would like to sell the tower, antenna, and rotor to someone in the local area.
  - Dan also spoke with Charlie about the tower that Steve will leave behind. Since the MCU will be decommissioned, perhaps the tower could be used to support activities in its place. The questions continue to come back to the basic issue of who will take responsibility for the tower, ensure it’s maintained, and get use from it.
  - Bruce will follow-up with Steve to let him know about our conversation. He’ll ask Steve for the model number of the tower and will see if it might make sense for a small group to go to Steve’s and take a look at the tower trailer and equipment to help make a good decision on the next steps (e.g. OCRA/DFMA purchase for use at Field Day and other events; an individual purchases the equipment; and other options).
- Officers/Directors Updates
  - John suggested that we research a local IEEE van that might be available to come out to Field Day or other events. Dan indicated he believes David Wright (W4LMW), an OCRA member, might have knowledge of the van. David lives two houses away from Bruce and Laurie. Bruce will follow-up with David to get more information.

- Dan has received the insurance policy premium information for this year. It appears that the cost will be the same as last year (\$450).
- Aurora reported that the 10-30 club has gone through another round of monthly activities. Members are making progress on their Morse Code training. Several folks in the group have voiced interest in making satellite contacts at Field Day. There are plans in place to set-up equipment a few weeks prior to Field Day to test making satellite contacts.
- Bruce mentioned that he and Laurie will be out of town for the entire month of July. He will follow-up, in an email, to make sure that everyone's summer plans will work for the group and planned board meetings.

Respectfully submitted,  
Laurie Meier, N1YXU  
OCRA Secretary