

OCRA Board Meeting Minutes – June 27, 2023

Board Meeting Attendees – Bruce (N1LN), Aurora (KN4VXB), Dave (W4SAR), Karen (KD4YJZ), Dee (KU4GC), Bill (N8BR), John (KX4P), and Laurie (N1YXU)

The meeting minutes from the May BOD Meeting were approved.

The meeting minutes from the June Membership Meeting were approved.

Discussion Topics:

- Old Business
 - Baha'i Center Filter Status (Open)
 - Dave has traded text messages with Donna at the Baha'i center regarding the schedule for changing filters. As soon as he has information, Dave will share the details with the Board.
 - Dan (KR4UB) has either already purchased or will be purchasing a few filters that will be brought over to store at the Baha'i Center for future use.
 - Repeater Reachability Testing (Closed)
 - Dee and Bruce talked at the June Membership Meeting and agreed, due to summer schedules, that it makes sense to pause the effort to include additional folks in the testing until at least September.
 - This approach will be adopted.
 - Field Day Update
 - Many thanks to Dave for the emails that were sent to the reflector in preparation for Field Day. Several topics were handled in a very thoughtful and detailed manner.
 - Preliminary feedback from the event:
 - Dave had 340 contacts on digital. He went on a tear one night on FT4 on 40m. Dave worked Australia on Sunday morning on 20m!
 - The "killer" station this year was 40/15 SSB. Joe (K4SAR) and Bill (KI4RAN) had more than 700 contacts! Awesome job! They used a double bazooka antenna.
 - CW contacts from the MCU were in the 400 range, as reported by Wilson (W4BOH). Howie (WA4PSC) also contributed about 300 CW contacts from his QTH.
 - Aurora reported that there was a satellite team that operated. Ben (KO4BHX) made an amazing tracker that worked really well. The satellite activity at Field Day was a great test of the satellite equipment that everyone has been working on.
 - The Friday night potluck dinner was a tremendous success! The pizza run on Saturday evening was also well received.

- The 6/10m station was not successful on 6m; however, there were a few 10m contacts.
 - Membership Meeting Programs (Open)
 - The question of canceling the July Membership Meeting was brought up. There are many who have vacation/travel plans. The Board agreed to cancel the July Membership Meeting. Bruce will send an email to the membership giving this update. Note: There will be a July Board meeting on Tuesday, July 25.
 - August – Dave will give a presentation and “live” demonstration on drones. He will also have an update regarding Field Day to share with the membership.
 - September – John can present the restoration on his SX88.
 - Bruce has talked with David Wright about the IEEE communication van that travels around the country for emergency response. Bruce will check back with David about which month (September, October, or November) works better for him. The program schedule will be shifted based on David’s response.
 - Based on the satellite activity from Field Day, Aurora recommended that we invite Ben (KO4BHX) to give a presentation regarding his satellite antenna tracker. Aurora will follow-up with Ben to check on his availability to give the presentation. She will let Bruce know Ben’s answer which will inform Bruce about the months available for the IEEE communications van presentation.
 - Repeater Activity – An update will be on the agenda for the July meeting.
- New Business
 - Since we are not currently partnered with the Emergency Operations Center in Orange County and working toward being able to react jointly to an emergency situation, should we initiate our own club activity to educate and train regarding preparedness for emergency communications?
 - There are folks within OCRA who recently completed a CERT (Community Emergency Response Training) course which was provided by individuals from the Orange County EOC. The CERT program focuses on neighborhoods being self-sufficient for several hours in the event of an emergency and allow first responders to be able to provide critical services to areas most impacted.
 - Chatham County amateur radio operators and members of the Chatham County EOC are working to develop a PACE (Primary, Alternate, Contingency, Emergency) plan that included predefined repeaters/frequencies that should be used in emergency situations. Standard procedures and predetermined plans are in place to ensure everyone knows his/her role and the process that is to be followed if the need were to arise.

- Should we look into providing similar training for OCRA members? If so, how do we move forward? What would be the goals of our efforts? Would we include members from both OCRA/DFMA?
- One tactic might be to have multiple neighborhoods complete CERT training while ensuring that the neighborhoods have licensed amateur radio operators in the neighborhoods. This could support having self-sufficiency in cases of emergency and also support having standard communications procedures in place that the amateur radio operators would follow. The amateur radio operators would provide a link of communication to better understand the impact in their given locations. The information would be provided to other amateur radio operators and to local EOCs.
- This type of discussion could be brought up at a membership meeting to determine interest and also see if there are folks who would want to lead the effort.
- Years ago, OCRA had a very active ARES organization. We had exercises that tested emergency operations, cards that have agreed frequencies to use, and predefined ways to communicate (e.g. call trees).
- There are also annual emergency training exercises, sponsored by the ARRL, and conducted in the Fall. These exercises are Simulated Emergency Tests (SET). The upcoming SET is scheduled for October 7 and 8, 2023. More information is available at this website - <https://ares.arrl.org/aresSET/>
- During the recent CERT training, members of the Orange County EOC offered to teach and/or plan additional CERT training sessions for neighborhoods or groups. Perhaps, OCRA members could be invited to a CERT training for our club.
- To ensure our training focus is meaningful and useful to the Orange County EOC, we can also work with our EOC contacts to learn where their communication gaps are and how we can best support them.
- After significant discussion, the agreed first step was to survey the OCRA membership to determine the overall interest in and commitment for this type of training and planning. Aurora volunteered to put together a survey to find out the level of interest and commitment members would have. The survey would include different levels of time and frequency for training.

Respectfully submitted,
Laurie Meier, N1YXU
OCRA Secretary