

OCRA Board Meeting Minutes – March 28, 2023

Board Meeting Attendees – Bruce (N1LN), Dan (KR4UB), John (KX4P), Aurora (KN4VXB), Chris (KY4OU), Bill (N8BR), Dave (W4SAR), Karen (KD4YJZ), Lenore (KF4PAB), Dee (KU4GC), Wilson (W4BOH), and Laurie (N1YXU)

The meeting minutes from the February 28 BOD Meeting were approved.

The meeting minutes from the March 13 Membership Meeting were approved.

Discussion Topics:

- Updated COVID Policy – Bruce
 - The updated policy was distributed to the membership via the reflector. To this point, there has been no feedback from anyone related to the updated policy.
 - Bruce will redistribute the updated policy prior to the April membership meeting.
 - Note that suggested changes (e.g. spacing the chairs to appropriate distances for social distancing) were not implemented at the March membership meeting since the updated policy had not been distributed at that point. The changes will be in effect beginning with the April membership meeting.
 - An action item was taken at the February BOD meeting for Board members to review and communicate options for HEPA air filtration at our membership meetings. After significant discussion regarding potential solutions (purchased filters, DIY filters, and supplementing the current heating/cooling system at the meeting facility), the plan to continue the discussion was –
 - Dave will work with the Baha'i Center leadership to understand the size of the filters that are currently being used and gain approval for us to purchase HEPA filters of the same size. Dave will also stop by the facility to measure the size of filters that are currently being used.
 - Aurora recommended analyzing the levels of safety that would result from installing varying numbers of HEPA filters.
- Morse Code Class Update – Wilson
 - Rather than learning Morse code, the focus is what do you do on the air after you've learned the code. For example, information about how to call CQ, how to give signal reports, and additional points would be the focus. There could be mock QSOs, a review of the common abbreviations, and other tips that will make people comfortable on the air. Wilson has started an outline for the class with more to come within the next few months.
 - The Morse code contact class could be a great follow on to the 10-30 challenge where participants commit to working on learning Morse code for ten minutes a day for 30 days. There are about 10 folks who are currently participating in the challenge.

- Several folks in the 10-30 challenge group have practice oscillators that could be used for the Morse code contact class if it were held on Zoom or over the air.
- Aurora will follow-up with the group to check their availability for a potential weekly 9pm session to continue to hone their Morse code skills. An invitation will also be sent to a broader audience to see if there are additional folks who would like to join the group. Chris and Wilson will be added to the current group's communications to ensure they are both aware of the group's activities.
- Repeater Coverage Testing – Bruce
 - Bruce shared the summary of the repeater coverage testing that took place during the prior two AUXCOMM Saturday nets. The summary includes results by person and that individual's ability to hit specific repeaters in the tri-county area. The information is sorted by showing the repeater with the most likely ability to be hit listed first. Not surprisingly, the OCRA 442.150 repeater was the one that has the most likely probability of being able to reach.
 - The next steps would include adding the geographic location of the people who participated, add the type of radios and power the individuals were using in the test, and understand how the information supports the recent repeater analysis. Information (such as the type of antenna) needs to be factored into the discussion and potential solutions for better coverage can be determined.
 - It would be great to have additional folks participate in the repeater testing to get a broader idea of coverage throughout the tri-county area. Bruce would be happy to assist in expanding the test to DFMA members and gain insight into the Durham County coverage.
 - Ultimately, this information and subsequent action would be key input to the primary and secondary repeater plan for the area. If there were an emergency, we would know how many repeaters need to be monitored to ensure that we would be able to communicate (receive and send) information throughout the tri-county area.
 - To allow OCRA/DFMA members the ability to do analysis for their own locations, radios, and ability to hit local repeaters, Dan will put together instructions on loading Google Maps and accessing the topographical maps for repeater coverage. After tax season, Dan will work with an additional few folks to broaden the maps to include information for more local repeaters.
- Programs Update – John and Bill
 - Aurora has volunteered to do a 3D printing program for the April membership meeting. The presentation will be planned for about 20 minutes. This would leave time for an additional program.
 - John commented on a few program potentials for upcoming meetings –
 - Bouvet Island video (the length of the video might need to be shortened)
 - John's son-in-law could give an overview of some of the projects that he is working on (e.g. 3D printing).

- John sent out a second email to the membership asking for input and volunteers. At this point, he has not received any responses.
 - Based on the previous discussion regarding the repeater testing at the AUXCOMM nets, Dan and Bruce will give an update to the membership at the April meeting and discuss next steps. The takeaway for everyone will be actions they can take to better understand the coverage at their locations and what can be done to improve their personal coverage. This will be the second presentation planned for April and will take about 20 to 30 minutes.
 - Dave also committed to giving a presentation focused on drones. It would need to be done in the summer time to allow a demonstration to be conducted outside.
 - Preliminary Field Day planning will be discussed at the May membership meeting.
 - The May membership meeting may also include an update on any follow-up information related to the repeater testing.
 - The June membership meeting will be dedicated to final Field Day planning.
 - John would like to give a presentation on the work completed to restore an SX88. This would likely be a program for the fall.
 - John will also inquire about a program related to radio astronomy by contacting members of a club that he belonged to in Virginia.
- Treasurer's Report – Dan
 - The repeater testing activities are driving high interest. In fact, on Sundays after the Saturday AUXCOMM training nets, folks are continuing to test and discuss repeater coverage on the air.
 - There has also been an increase in OCRA membership. Currently, we have 107 members with current dues paid, 3 members who need to renew their dues, and 4 members who have expiring memberships.
 - Over the last twelve months, we have had 17 new members join OCRA.
 - Year-to-date in 2023, we have had 6 new members join OCRA.
 - To further explore areas of interest of the membership, Dan recommended that we all review information that members have shared on the OCRA website in terms of their personal interest. This could be very interesting for all of us to review and potentially approach members to see if they would consider providing a program. This information is also key in engaging with new members to make them feel welcome and to gain insight into areas they would like to learn more about. The data would also be helpful in retention of members since it highlights members who have allowed their memberships to expire.
 - We have received an interest payment as a result of the recent bank change.

Respectfully submitted,
Laurie Meier, N1YXU
OCRA Secretary