

OCRA Board Meeting Minutes – February 27, 2024

Board Meeting Attendees – Bruce (N1LN), Boyd (KO4GJO), Dan (KR4UB), Aurora (KN4VXB), Dee (KU4GC), Dave (W4SAR), Karen (KD4YJZ), Chris (NY4OU), Fred (KN4QBZ), Ron (KO4RON), Wilson (W4BOH), Bob (W4FK), John (KX4P), and Laurie (N1YXU)

The minutes from the OCRA January Board meeting and OCRA Membership meeting were approved.

Discussion Topics:

- Update on the 2023 OCRA Christmas Party Expenses – Laurie
 - There were 42 people who signed-up for the Christmas party. At \$10 per person, we had a total of \$420 collected. Our expenses totaled \$263.81. That left us a surplus of \$156.19.
 - One thing to note is that some members of the Board donated ham radio related prizes. If these prizes had been purchased, the cost would have exceeded \$100.
- Update on the 2024 initiatives discussed at the January OCRA Board Meeting – All
 - Handi-Finder Build Day – Aurora gave an update on the planning status of the event schedule for Saturday, March 16, at the Efland Baha'i Center. The event is a “go” with many volunteers bringing equipment to use, several people who will be building the kits, and the space reserved for the event. A few Board members, who were planning on attending the build event, indicated they would bring coax, adapters, and connectors that could be used, if needed.
 - Picnic/Public Outreach – Bob updated the group with specifics about the event.
 - It will be held on Saturday, April 13, at the Fews Ford picnic shelter in the Eno River State Park starting in the 9:00 to 10:00am range.
 - In order to put up antennas, Bob was informed that a special event permit will need to be issued. Bob is working on submitting the appropriate request for the permit. He will send the permit application via email to the Board members to see if anyone has recommendation for wording and what to include to request permission to put up antennas and use radio equipment.
 - Based on the group discussion, it was decided that running wires in trees was not the best solution for setting up antennas. Buddy poles and other portable antenna set-ups were recommended.
 - In terms of number of HF stations for the event, likely only a few are needed to provide a ham radio demonstration to those who pass by. Battery power rather than generator power was also recommended to minimize noise. Bob will make another site visit to make sure there is power turned on at the location. As radio operators and focused on emergency preparedness, there

should be folks in both DFMA and OCRA who would have batteries that could be brought to the event to supply needed power.

- It was also suggested to activate the event as a POTA operation.
- Bob will bring a sign-up sheet to the March OCRA meeting. People will be asked to bring a dish to pass. Hot dogs will be provided.
- Aurora will scope out a good location for her to hide the transmitter for the fox hunt.
- Repeater Futures (Linking/Implementation) – The last HamPi gathering was hosted at Dan's house. Many people attended. Dan and John gave everyone an update and provided a show and tell regarding the new repeater and some of the linking that will be completed soon.
 - The "075" repeater is going to go to Gibbs Lane and should be installed within a week.
 - In terms of linking, the repeater (from Dan's basement) has been connected to the "443.475" machine that is down at John's shop. The linking audio quality is truly awesome and reliable.
 - As soon as "075" is installed at Gibbs Lane, the focus will be on "475" and getting it back down to the Siler City tower.
 - Then, the "145.230" machine will be next. This is the machine that had to come off the air since the Fire Tower site was decommissioned. It will go to the Northeast Park tower site. The Chatham County EOC is working on the antennas for the site. Hopefully, this location will provide helpful coverage for the Chapel Hill area from the south.
 - Sincere thanks to the everyone who has worked diligently on the repeater coverage for our area. We are all looking forward to having the linking capability.
- Best way to communicate to the club members –
 - Some folks are not on the reflector at the moment, and this requires a second push to have information redistributed to those that are. For example, when Bruce sends out information to the reflector about an upcoming meeting, Dan follows-up by sending the information to a second distribution list. That list includes several folks who are not subscribed to reflector. The secondary note also includes a dues reminder for the individual and allows that person to simply click on a link to go to their membership profile. There is an option to opt in or out of automatic updates on the profile.
 - The March presentation that Fred and Bruce will give at the Membership Meeting will focus on emergency preparedness and communications. The presentation will highlight the required training and commitments that will be involved for several types of emergency communication. As a result, there will be "homework" assigned to club members to go into their personal

profiles and select/validate the types of communications they would participate in. The responses will be consolidated and reviewed at an upcoming Board meeting.

- In terms of reaching new members, there was significant discussion about ensuring the OCRA website is able to be found by searching on the internet. The use of metatags, SEO (Search Engine Optimization), and other tools will be revisited to ensure visibility.
- A/V Equipment for the Monthly Membership Meetings –
 - Mark's (KR3AM) last meeting will be March.
 - It is critical that we determine how the monthly meetings will be managed from an audio/visual perspective going forward. The solution will allow members to attend concurrently in-person and on Zoom, as we have done for months now.
 - A portable, easy solution would be preferred. Obviously, a good quality solution is also needed. Specific areas of consideration include wireless microphones and speakers.
 - A potential source of equipment is the UNC surplus store. Dan and Chris may find a time to meet there to look at the equipment that is available.
 - We will continue to use a hotspot for internet connectivity.
- Upcoming Programs – John
 - Randy (KF4O) has volunteered to give a presentation on a ham clock. The timing for that presentation has not been determined.
 - April program – John made a recommendation that the program focuses on getting to know the membership. Each person who attends (in-person or on Zoom) would have about two minutes each to let us know when they became a radio operator, what other-than-ham-radio interests they have, and add any other information they would like. It would be a good opportunity to get to know each other and, potentially, find presentation topics for future meetings. The Board members enthusiastically supported John's recommendation.
 - May program – One component will be Field Day Planning.
 - June program – One component will be the final Field Day Planning. Another could be coax connector assembly.

Respectfully submitted,
Laurie Meier, N1YXU
OCRA Secretary