

DELAWARE REPEATER ASSOCIATION (DRA)
MINUTES OF QUARTERLY MEETING
MONDAY 11 June 2018
(As Approved on Monday 10 September 2018)

The Quarterly meeting of the Delaware Repeater Association (DRA) was held at the Brandywine Town Center Community Recreation Center, 4050 Brandywine Parkway, North Wilmington, DE, on Monday, 11 June 2018.

DRA President Frank Filipkowski (AD3M) called the meeting to order at 1908, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence to honor fallen first responders, military, and Silent Keys. Frank indicated that there was no formal agenda for tonight's meeting.

The following amateurs were present for this meeting: Joe Petro N1FLU; Paul Milazzo K3PGM; Rob Olsewski N3FJ; Jeff Backus N3GJB; John DiGiovanni N3LUD; Bill Greenhalgh W3DE; Dave Scott KC3BEJ; Mark Stilman KA3JUU; Frank Filipkowski AD3M; Dave Stepnowski KC3AM; and Mark Edgar N3JPW.

REPORTS

Frank reported that the installation of the antennas (including an AREDN MESH Network) at the Windy Hills water tower in Newark, DE has been completed. He complimented all persons involved in the project, both those who assisted in the physical work as well as those who contributed financially.

Frank also brought in a 2 meter amplifier he recently overhauled for use at the Windy Hills tower. Its input is 20W and output 110W.

Frank also received a list of 16 new Technician licensees from Bill Duveneck (KB3KYH). DRA Vice President Dave Stepnowski (KC3AM) recommended that DRA Secretary Dave Scott (KC3BEJ) reach out to these new licensees and inform them about the DRA and other area Amateur Radio organizations, as well as upcoming Field Day activities. Dave Scott agreed to take care of this.

Dave Stepnowski also reported that conditions were OK at the W3DRA Repeater on Ebright Rd, and that he fixed a hole in the concrete blockhouse where birds were getting in.

Treasurer Mark Stillman (KA3JUU) gave his report: at this meeting there was \$1959.99 in our account. Motion was made to approve the Treasurer's report, which was adopted unanimously. A copy of the report will be appended to the final approved copy of these minutes.

Secretary Dave Scott presented a copy of the edited minutes of the 19 March 2018 meeting. Motion was made to adopt these minutes (following a final correction made by Dave Stepnowski), and the minutes were adopted unanimously.

Dave Scott also reported on the results of membership surveys taken on the questions of future meeting locations, and adding the WA3UYJ Porter Water Filtration Plant Repeater to the DRA's insurance policy. Dave Scott reported that eight members (7 current on their dues, one in arrears) voted on the meeting location issue, with four votes in favor of keeping meetings at Brandywine Town Center, one having no preference, and two voting for the Gilliam Building in New Castle. A discussion ensued about

alternating venues as a way to increase attendance at our meetings. Dave Stepnowski inquired about using the Christiana Hospital facility in Middletown, DE, as an alternate venue. Director John DiGiovanni (N3LUD) said he'd look into the availability of the Middletown facility.

(SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE: on Tuesday 12 June 2018 John notified Dave Scott that the Christiana Middletown was not available for the remainder of 2018, rendering that option moot.)

Concerning the question of the WA3UYJ Repeater, Dave Scott reported that in the survey 12 members (9 current on their dues; 3 in arrears) voted on the issue, all in favor of covering the WA3UYJ Repeater on our insurance.

Motion was made to put this question to an official vote. Motion passed unanimously. Bill Greenhalgh (W3DE) agreed to take care of the insurance paperwork. Bill also accepted to become Trustee for WA3YUJ, and will notify the T-MARC of this change.

Some discussion was had on how to best keep track of members' dues status. Treasurer Stillman has developed an Excel spreadsheet to keep track of dues payments. Another member suggested posting the current roster of dues paying members on the DRA web site (not to include any protected Personally Identifiable Information). Mark Edgar (N3JPW) suggested having a Pay Pal option for dues payments via the web site.

NEW BUSINESS:

Frank discussed upcoming Field Day events at Springer Middle School (FSARC) and Claymont Elementary School. All members agreed to take steps to maximize interest and public awareness of these events to promote amateur radio.

OLD BUSINESS:

Frank brought up the issue of improved capability with packet and Winlink, which was discussed at the last meeting. He noted some difficulty in getting his USB equipped Kantronics TNC to communicate with his radio, and said the old serial port models worked better. He will continue to troubleshoot this matter.

Paul Milazzo (K3PGM) updated the group on the status of the mesh-network installation recently set up on the Windy Hills Tower. Both 900 MHz nodes, which were working fine after the installation, are currently down; the SHF primary and backup links to Christiana Hospital are still working. One 900 MHz node, WH-9-E, just appears to have lost its configuration and needs to be reset; normally this reset could be done remotely, but because the diagnostic server has not yet been installed at Windy Hills, a site visit is necessary.

Unfortunately, the other node, WH-9-SW, has a cable fault. Remote diagnostics show a cross-pair short on the Ethernet cable, and appeared to suggest it was located at the far end (at ~216 ft). Paul suggested a drone inspection for visible cable damage on the tower if the next site visit uncovers no problems on the ground.

Paul also reported he and Jerry Simonowits (KB2GCG) were on the Ebright Rd tower recently to reposition a 900 MHz Yagi in the direction of Springer Middle School so as to facilitate some Mesh

Network comms during Field Day.

Motion was unanimously adopted to adjourn this meeting at 20:20.

Following adjournment, members stayed to watch a video presentation of drone footage of the Windy Hills Tower antennas made by Rob Olsewski (N3FJ)

Next meeting will be Monday 10 September 2018 at the Brandywine Town Center at 19:00 local.

Respectfully Submitted by Dave Scott (KC3BEJ), Secretary