

DELAWARE REPEATER ASSOCIATION (DRA)
MINUTES OF QUARTERLY MEETING
MONDAY 11 March 2019
as approved 19 June 2019

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 March 2019.

DRA President Frank Filipkowski (AD3M) called the meeting to order at 1907, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence to honor fallen first responders, military, and Silent Keys, including SK N3IOD Bill Hammond.

The following amateurs were present for this meeting: Frank Filipkowski AD3M (President); Dave Stepnowski KC3AM (Vice President); Mark Stillman KA3JUU (Treasurer); Dave Scott KC3BEJ (Secretary); Paul Milazzo K3PGM; Lee Gray W3LDG; and Mark Edgar N3JPW.

Frank Filipkowski proposed the meeting agenda to include discussions on Echo Link availability for 146.70 and 146.730; work parties for maintenance of our sites at Ebright Road and the Newark water tower; and, moving the W3DRA Packet node from 145.010 to another frequency to avoid interference from nearby nodes also on 145.010.

REPORTS

Frank Filipkowski gave a brief update on Bill Greenhalgh's (W3DE) medical condition. He also read a 31 January 2019 letter from the organizers of the 2019 Delmarva Hamfest scheduled for the Cheer Center in Georgetown on 27 April, which invited the DRA to purchase a table at the event for a reduced rate. Dave Scott suggested it could be a good way to promote the DRA and recruit new members. No decision was made about this offer.

Dave Stepnowski gave an update on maintenance issues at the Newark repeater.

Mark Stillman gave the Treasurer's report, indicating a balance in the account of \$2209.37 as of 5 March 2019. He noted that the amount recorded in the bank account for dues paid to date (13 paid up for 2019 so far) was a bit less than the \$20/year for individual, due to small fees assessed by Pay Pal for those members that used that service to pay their dues. Mark noted that there were 26 dues paying members in 2018, and some of those will be paying their 2019 dues in the forthcoming months. The report was unanimously approved. A copy of the Treasurer's report will be appended to final approved minutes of this meeting.

Dave Scott read the edited draft minutes of the 10 December 2018 Quarterly Meeting. Paul Milazzo noted one additional edit, to wit, recommending that the DRA look into forming a new entity to obtain 501(C)(3) status to pursue grants to pay for maintenance work. With this edit incorporated into the draft, the minutes were unanimously approved. (SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE: Paul's comment will be incorporated into these minutes because the text of the 11 December minutes has already been published on the DRA website as of 15 March 2019- Dave Scott, Secretary)

Lee Gray reported on the status of the Newark repeater. He noted he was dealing with a rodent problem in the shack. There followed some discussion on the appropriate output power settings for this repeater to ensure maximum lifespan of the components. Some stations reported difficulty connecting into this repeater, particularly when using HTs. Additional comments were raised about interference from a Wires-X network.

Paul Milazzo reported the latest on the MESH Network. He noted that he obtained the repair parts for the D-STAR network, but has not had time to do the work. He further noted that issues with the East facing 900MHz MESH node on the Newark water tower were still not resolved. He reported that the 3.4GHz node was having similar problems, possibly due to interference from nearby Verizon cell towers. He reported no difficulty with the 5GHz node. It was suggested that shielding could be installed on the vicinity of our MESH antennas to protect from Verizon cell tower signal interference.

Paul also reported that Brendan McNeil W3VD re-aimed the 2.4GHz node at Christiana Hospital and verified a link with his (W3VD) house.

Paul raised concern that a new building under construction at the Christiana Hospital complex could pose a problem in the future by blocking the pathways for the existing EHF antennas; he is going to consult with John DiGiovanni, N3LUD, of the CARES group for further information.

NEW BUSINESS

Lee Gray reported he was in discussions with Newark PD Deputy Chief Feeney about accessing the Newark EOC to test the amateur radio equipment installed there. D.C. Feeney was enthusiastic about obtaining his Technician license, and may have other officers on staff also inclined to get licensed. Dave Scott suggested coordinating the Newark EOC test with NCC EOC. Lee will contact Dave with some suggested dates/times for a joint equipment test.

Frank Filipkowski suggested some test prep options for Newark PD personnel, perhaps to coincide with end of semester licensing exams held for DTCC students enrolled in the basic electronics tech program.

Lee also noted he may try to set up an Echo Link node at his house for 146.700. Motion to authorize the use of 146.700 for Echo Link was unanimously approved.

Dave Scott reminded meeting attendees about the ongoing Monday Winlink net established by K2CQW, intended to enhance local amateurs' ability with Winlink.

OLD BUSINESS

Frank Filipkowski advised attendees that ongoing maintenance of the fence and painting of the brick structure at the Ebright Road facility needs to be done as soon as the weather improves. He will post a work schedule soon.

Frank also noted that two other packet nodes located within 15 Miles of Ebright Road operate on 145.010. To avoid interference, Frank suggested moving W3DRA-10 node from 145.010 to 145.020. No motion or vote was made to officially adopt this idea at this meeting.

TRAINING

Frank presented a Power Point show on a recent Florida EMA ARES training exercise, called Exercise Viral Duo. The ham radio portion of the exercise involved passing message traffic (voice & digital) as well as setting up and operating emergency radio equipment. It was interesting to note the post exercise evaluations, particularly with regard to "areas for improvement." These included needing more familiarity with Winlink and other digital modes, some challenges in deploying equipment, and unexpected HF interference caused by the portable generators.

Paul Milazzo did a "show and tell" featuring a UHF Yagi antenna, and a 5.8 GHz MESH radio dish. The Yagi was an Altelix AY9G18M2-PRO and the dish was a Mikrotik LHG XL HP5.

Meeting was adjourned at 2047.

Next meeting will be Monday 10 June 2019 at the Brandywine Town Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Scott KC3BEJ, Secretary

Delaware Repeater Association

Treasurer's Report

March 5, 2019

Beginning Balance (December 4, 2018) **\$ 2048.32**

Income

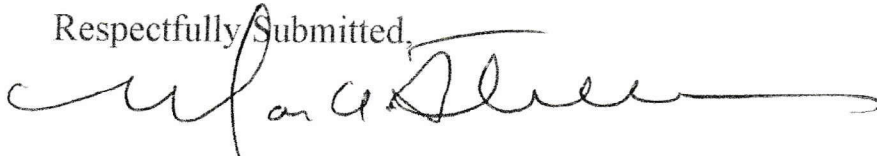
Dues Received	\$ 185.89
Accumulated Interest	<u>\$.16</u>
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 186.05

Expenses

Annual Franchise Tax Filing (DE)	<u>\$ 25.00</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES:	\$ 25.00

Balance in Checking Account **\$2209.37**

Respectfully Submitted,



Mark Stillman KA3JUI, Treasurer