

DELAWARE REPEATER ASSOCIATION (DRA)
MINUTES OF QUARTERLY MEETING
MONDAY 9 March 2020
(As approved 8 June 2020)

The Quarterly meeting of the Delaware Repeater Association (DRA) was held at the Brandywine Town Center, 4050 Brandywine Parkway, North Wilmington, DE, on Monday 9 March 2020.

DRA President Frank Filipkowski called the meeting to order at 19:02, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence to honor fallen first responders, military, and Silent Keys, including W3RMM.

The following persons were present: President Frank Filipkowski (AD3M); Vice President Dave Stepnowski (KC3AM); Treasurer Mark Stillman (KA3JUJ); Secretary Dave Scott (KC3BEJ); Trustee and Register Agent Bill Greenhalgh (W3DE); Member at Large John DiGiovanni (N3LUD); Alan Amberg (K3AAA); Joe Grib (KI3B); Paul Milazzo (K3PGM); Tom Perry (KC3FAU); and, Wayne Hale (K3WHH).

REPORTS:

Frank reported that we have an opportunity to get a table at the upcoming Delmarva Amateur Radio & Electronics Expo in Georgetown for \$15.00. Dave Stepnowski said that we have some hard line we could sell at the Expo, and we could use this opportunity to put up a DRA poster and recruit some new members . A motion to approve \$15 for a table at the Expo was unanimously approved.

Dave Stepnowski also reported that the 146.955 linked repeater is doing OK; it was down briefly but has been on line since 1 March. Bill Greenhalgh reported that he spoke to Lee Gray (W3LDG) concerning the Windy Hills (Newark) repeater and the UHF amplifier is working. Bill also reported that he got the renewal as Trustee for 146.955, and he gave Dave Stepnowski a copy of his license to post at the Porter Road Filtration Station site.

Dave Stepnowski reported that someone broke into the cabin at the top of the Ebright Rd tower in December; they cut through with bolt cutters, but there was no evidence of tampering with equipment. Dave recommended additional security cameras for the site.

Bill and John DiGiovanni got notified by another amateur about possible unlawful use of the repeater by non-licensed persons several days ago. Frank suggested trying to make a recording of the offending communications if possible.

Mark Stillman delivered his Treasurer's Report, dated 3 March 2020, a copy of which is hereby incorporated by reference into these minutes. He reported 4 memberships were paid this year so far. His report was unanimously approved.

Dave Scott reviewed the minutes from the 9 December 2019 meeting, which were unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

Frank raised the topic of amending our Constitution if we decide to go for 501 (c)(3) status. The first page of our Constitution may need to be amended. Dave Scott said he'd send out copies of the Constitution for members to review prior to the June meeting.

Bill asked how we might go about fund raising. Dave Scott suggested looking at various grants or target specific donors to fund specific projects. Paul Milazzo recommended exploring a wide variety of funding sources.

Members agreed to look at the Constitution for proposed revisions.

Paul then updated the group on the status of the MESH system. He said a camera has been installed on the roof of Wilmington Hospital but it's not functional yet. He noted that the ground system needs to be improved at the hospital. Paul noted that the link between Wilmington Hospital and the Porter Road Filtration Station (146.955) was working very well. He said a Raspberry Pi diagnostic server at PRFS is out, but it's not affecting normal operations.

The UPS at the Windy Hills Repeater went out in January, so we are now just plugging the equipment into a wall outlet, which renders the equipment susceptible to power surges, causing resets. Frank provided a new UPS at this meeting. Installing new AREDN software should fix the reset issue.

Discussion moved to getting more effective cable testing equipment. Paul proposed getting a cable verifier; Fluke has just introduced a new device which may be suitable for our needs. It costs about \$600. There is also another unit made by Ideal Networks.

A motion to authorize the purchase of the Fluke unit was unanimously approved. Once Paul provides Mark with the specific details of which unit to get, Mark will order it. The device should have a 10 year life span.

Paul noted that another good reason to go 501(c)(3) is to be able to raise funds for test equipment and the MESH network.

Dave Scott updated everyone on the latest with ARES and the upcoming May FEMA graded Radiological Emergency Preparedness drill involving NCC OEM and the Salem-Hope Creek nuclear plant. He also mentioned trying the 448.825 repeater in Delaware City as a possible alternative to 146.730 during ARES exercises, based on feedback he got from the October 2019 Simulated Emergency Test. Someone also suggested using the Salem NJ repeater at 146.675.

Paul mentioned a VARA Winlink Gateway on 20m in Newtown PA that might be an EMCOMM option.

Meeting adjourned at 20:00. Next meeting will be Monday 8 June 2020 at the BTC.

Respectfully submitted, 3 June 2020

Dave Scott, KC3BEJ, DRA Secretary