

Alachua ARES/NFARC/NF4AC Clubs

MINUTES

March 11, 2020

Meeting held at Gainesville Red Cross, 6th Ave NW and 16th St

Attendance: 15

Mike Ridlon
John Kotsaly
Gordon Gibby
Craig Fugate
Susan Halbert
Earl McDow
John Trites
COL David Huckstep
Chris Carr
Earl McDow
Vann Chesney
Leland Gallup
Bob Guertin
Mike Shaffer
Jeff Capehart

Meeting called to order at 1850

Minutes for February 2020 Meeting **approved**.

1. **Introductions.** John Kotsaly introduced himself and submitted an application to join ARES.
2. **ARES Task Book Sign Offs.** Jeff Capehart passed around copies of the ARES and County Task books pages, with discussion of Levels 1 and 2. The Level 3 on the hand out is not accurate, as it does not include all Level 3 requirements. . Then conducted Level 1 training. Showed the ARES Standardized Training Plan. Put up on the projection screen the TaskBook pages including the County. Level 1 has only 2 requirements. Showed on screen on how to program a radio with VHF and UHF (one of the two Level One requirements). Included PL convention in this area, typical offsets (+ 600 kHz above 147, - below 147. Standard on UHF is+ 5 MHz. W4UFL described the ARES chain of command. 15 Divisions, Micky Baker is our Division Director, Southeastern Division. The Divisions are NOT in the ARES chain of command, but are associated with HQ ARRL, since the Division Directors are on the ARRL Board and are not properly part of the field organization. FCC call districts are different from ARRL Divisions. Under the Divisions, FL has more than one section; there are. 3 sections in FL, ours is NFL, the North Florida Section. There are 71 sections altogether. Each section has a Section Manager; elected for two year term. They direct/control everything ARRL in the Section. Most states are single section. NFL comprises 43 counties. We have more ARRL members in the Section than any other in the Division, and perhaps the country. Next under the Section is the District; there are 11 Districts in the NFL. We are in the Santa Fe District.

Includes Alachua, Gilchrist, Levy, Dixie. ARES is based on the field organization, beginning with the Section Manager. The SM is the only elected ARRL person in the Section. The SM appoints Section Emergency Coordinator: SEC, SEC can optionally have district ECs. EC for a county (under the optional Section District subelement) is the highest field organization rep of ARRL in the county/parish. EC can appoint Assistant Emergency Coordinators. ARRL HQ, SM, SEC, DEC, EC, AEC, Member is the chain of command. The Division Director is completely out of the ARES Chain of Command. Div Director is part of the ARRL Board of Directors. Everyone below SM is appointed. Karl Martin K4HBN is our SEC; Assistant SEC is David Davis WA4WES; No DEC for the Santa Fe District; Jeff Capehart is the EC. To cement the picture of ARES' chain of command, W4UFL, our EC, used 2 questions from EC-001. These describe the command structure for ARES. Another slide showed the ECs for Gilchrist (John Greiner, Levy, and Dixie – vacant) besides Capehart. Jeff then discussed task book signoffs. Level 1 signed off by the EC; Level 2 and 3 can be signed off by Gordon Gibby. The print out doesn't include Level 3 completely. Task book should be with you when you deploy. Each member responsible for printing off the task book in toto.

3. **EMCOMM EXERCISE 2020 HotCold!** KX4Z showed rollup of traffic during the Exercise. Formal, tactical, voice and digital. Compared 2019 with 2020. More traffic in 2019, but more people participated in 2019. Showed draft of some of the core capability results; this exercise especially focused on mass care, with ~ 38 objectives in support of that core capability. KX4Z compiled all the results of the 6 evaluators input on how participants did. Many Ps (Passed without challenges) recorded for the core capabilities. KX4Z frankly described failures in the exercise design that resulted in U's (Unsuccessful) for FLBDR and "untested" for other core capabilities. Susan Halbert offered view that we did better this year than last year. KX4Z said that an after-exercise telecon with Michigan said that FL signals were loud except for the shelters participating in the exercise. Takeaway: amps beat barefoot transceivers, and a good home antenna is better than rapidly deployed field antenna. Cragen Fugate pointed out that in real disasters traffic needs to go during the day, health and welfare at night. That SSB is problematic during the day, based on this exercise, is a real-world constraint on non-digital/CW message handling over longer distances. VHF of course not an issue in the exercise. This exercise was the first time that RMS gateways were saturated; this, too, is a real world consideration that the exercise revealed. KX4Z believes that HotCold! Was the largest HSEEP exercise done by amateur radio operators east of the Rockies. He is still working on the major task of the final review/publication..
4. **FLORIDA BAPTIST RELIEF Field Trip, KX4Z and S. Reisner.** Showed an antenna that KX4Z put up at the FL Baptist site (PCC); he checked in on the SHARES with loudest signal he's ever heard. Showed a checklist that PCC uses; we use same checklist at EOC here in Alachua County. Went through a number of tasks accomplished, including connections and antennas put up. Observed that ambient RF noise is a major concern, and that ARES members should keep track of their "usual" noise by time of day, frequency, and time of year, so that we can each know what is "normal" at our home locations. This provides point of reference for us when we deploy.
5. **TOWER TRAILER.** Mike Ridlon updated status of the design structure proposed for the trailer; showed a CAD drawing. Drawing illustrated the issues involved, such as inadequate clearance for trailer to tow vehicle. Other issue is the tongue weight. Total weight not more than 1000 lbs. Can also put, e.g., generator, etc., on the trailer. Early stage of design

development. COL Huckstep invited Ridlon to look at a very similar design parked at ASO to get design ideas.

6. **APRS Update.** KX4Z attended the TechConf. APRS to the ISS with a Baofeng. Gibby tried to contact, but was unsuccessful. ISS packet station is down.
7. **EOC Field Day.** KX4Z hasn't yet discussed with Mr. Grieb. Still working on improving HF operation, and GARS will be in Waldo. Trites suggested an additional EOC station.
8. **SWR Measuring.** AA3YB delivered a presentation on SWR measurement; what SWR is, why measuring it is important, and how this is done. Discussed difference between meters and analyzers, how meters are frequency dependent. Showed SWR on 50 as compared with 100 ohms. KX4Z ended with a discussion of what the actual electrical effect is of mismatched impedance; dielectric and conductive losses. Discussed the merits of using ladder line to operate non-resonant antennas with high SWR. Balanced line has low losses because of the air dielectric. Window line doesn't work well covered in ice.
9. **Corona Virus, COVID-19, update.** Jeff Capehart gave a brief update on the rapidly developing worldwide scope of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Meeting adjourned 2055.