

Alachua ARES/NFARC/NF4AC Clubs

MINUTES

JUNE 10, 2020

Meeting held via ZOOM, instead of in person at the American Red Cross, Gainesville Red Cross, 6th Ave NW and 16th St

Attendance:

Jeff Capehart
Judy Gardner
Earl McDow
Wendell Wright
Mike Ridlon
COL David Huckstep
Leland Gallup
Vann Chesney
Jim Bledsoe
Dalton Herding
Bob Guertin
Gordon Gibby
Arc Thames EC SFSanta Rosa County
Mike Perry K1SFN
Susan Halbert
Bob Guertin
Randy....N4AYS
John Trites
Rosemary Jones
Craig Fugate

Meeting called to order at 1903

Minutes for May 2020 Meeting **approved**.

Introductions

1. **Working closely and Intensively Together.** In view of the intensive work being done in preparation for the NFARC/ARES Field Day, to be held on 27 and 28 June at the Alachua County Emergency Operation Center (EOC), KX4Z thought it opportune to discuss methods for having disparate volunteers “pull in the same direction” to make the planning and execution of FD....and any other work that a group of volunteers might undertake together.
2. **Volunteer work supporting Field Day.** KX4Z briefly gave some overarching information relating to preparation for Field Day; this involved Planning, headed up by John, NO5X, Operations, headed up by AA3YB and deputies, Finance and Accounting, headed up by Susan, KG4VWI, and Logistics, headed up by Rosemary, KG4QBZ. KX4X used a handwritten drawing, which he displayed via screen share for all attendees. The concept of the operation is

that this will be a “2F” FD event...meaning that it will be at an Emergency Operations Center and locations within a 1000' radius. There will be two principle stations: Station One will be the HF station at the EOC radio room. KX4Z described recent steps to improve this station and to get it ready. These steps involved putting in the IC-7300 purchased by the Sheriff's Dept, as well as the new 1000 LDG autotuner. These two are now configured with an amplifier and tested. The goal is to achieve 150w digital (maximum power under FD rules without taking a points “hit.” This station will “talk” via a WiFi/MESH microwave network, using logging software that has been tested and works real time on the MESH network. The other end of the MESH chain is Station Two, an HF and VHF station with robust digital, power generation (generators, solar, and batteries), Station Three, a satellite operation, and Station Four, a “Get on the Air” station using one of the ACSO go boxes. KX4Z worked through the architecture of the overall system using his handwritten drawing. As it is, this FD effort will involve more parts and more capability (for example, a real-time, air gapped, MESH network that will allow for penetration of 18” thick walls and the crossing of some 500' of distance) than we've ever attempted before. The satellite and GOTA stations are “free” for FD rules purposes...meaning that we're a two station operation but also can use satellite and GOTA operations for additional points without becoming more than a “2” transmitter station.

3. **Report of FD Planning, by NO5X, John Trites:** John reported on the third draft of the FD planning document being used by ARES – the ICS 201. While he described the basic concept of the operation, KX4Z showed by screen share relevant sections of the 201. John's beautifully comprehensive 201 had, among other parts, annexes for safety and health (important as the COVID-19 pandemic is still ongoing) and a band plan – the latter crucial for Operations to manage the use of spectrum and modes to maximize points and minimize interference. The latter was also the subject of discussion, as bandpass filters are and have been built to deal with the problem of interference caused by stations/antennas operating in close proximity. A particularly unique and detailed part of the 26page (!) 201 was the description and analysis of the multi-piece MESH and logging system. KX4Z discussed the concept of the power management operation, with generators, solar panels, batteries, and even trucks for battery recharging – all located with filtration or distance to reduce RFI. Between KX4Z and NO5X a good overview of FD was laid out.
4. **Report of FD Operations Section by AA3YB, W4ZSW, KI4KEA:** AA3YB's report was compromised by technical issues (AA3YB's internet signal was unstable and he dropped out). In the end, the most important point that could be made was made – there is a dress rehearsal scheduled for Saturday, 20 June, at the EOC. Participants should arrive NLT than 0800. Moreover, AA3YB was able to announce that there is a FD sign up via Google Forms – link on the NFARC website.
5. **Report of FD Logistics Chief: Rosemary Jones.** Rosemary recounted her working with the service that will deliver a Porta Pottie to the sight for FD; also discussed were wash stations, water supplies, battery and transportation needs, as well as canopy
6. **Report of FD Finance and Accounting: KG4VWI, Susan Halbert:** Announced that the Porta Pottie has been paid; KX4Z and AA3YB have announced they will help fund the requirement either in whole or in part, depending on the final sums.
7. **Report of FD PIO/GOTA: W4UFL, Jeff Capehart** Jeff described the hours in which the PIO and GOTA stations would be active for public outreach.

8. **Discussion of FD (including use of ICS, etc).** There always has been discussion among ARES members of the ICS system. This led KX4Z to open a discuss of whether the ICS system should be used for this FD (and by extension other activities). A “candid and frank” exchange of views followed: some favoring the ICS system as it provided a good planning architecture and a common operating picture with the broader EM world. Others noted that the paperwork of the ICS planning “world” is burdensome. KK4INZ noted that the ICS method is not to be exclusionary, and is only a method, not an end in and of itself. Motion tendered to accept the work that has been done for FD using ICS practices. Motion passed.
9. **Handling my Hurt Feelings: AA3YB, Leland Gallup.** Following on the KX4Z's initial comments on working together, AA3YB offered some thoughts on how we can – assuming agreed on goals – recognize the ways our feelings can be hurt through human interaction, and on some techniques to avoid/minimize the hurt and so advance towards the goal.
10. **Radiogram Practice.** KI4KEA, Wendell, acting as a Net Control Station, used a 205 that had been distributed before the meeting, to take check in's by meeting attendants using the area's common repeaters. Upshot....eight achieved check ins. It appears that only the 820 repeater is generally reachable by all check ins. The bottom line is that it will be difficult for an Alachua NCS to use other repeaters for having traffic passed by the net “off frequency” (meaning the principle 820 net frequency). This is a reality that we as a group must learn how to deal with – having only one reliable repeater for all net check ins might mean that traffic will have to be passed on frequency. Not optimal.
11. **Operating at 150 Watts.** KX4Z briefly outlined the FD stations that will use amplifiers (identical) to achieve sustainable 150w work on digital for long periods.

Meeting adjourned at 2104.