

Alachua ARES/NFARC/NF4AC Clubs

MINUTES

DECEMBER 14, 2022

Attendance: 15. Meeting held in person at the Queen of Peace Catholic Community and also held via ZOOM.

Gordon Gibby
Leland Gallup
Mike Shaffer
Jim Bledsoe
Susan Halbert
Wendell Wright
David Huckstep
Eric Pleace
Vann Chesney
Brett Wallace
Emily Wallace
Jeff Capehart
Reid Tillery
Lorilyn Roberts
Jonathan (guests)
Lolly (guests)

Introductions. From 1830 until 1859 when the meeting commenced. The NFARC/NF4AC radio club met for this month in person and via Zoom.

- 1. INTRODUCTION/APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 2022 MINUTES.** Minutes approved.
- 2. JANUARY 2023 GENERAL CLASS LICENSE COURSE PLANNING.** KX4Z put on the table a discussion of whether to delay the class from its currently scheduled dates of January 7 and January 8, 2022. Consensus was that we should drive on with the 7/8 Jan date. There is already some advertising of the class, and more will follow. The floor was then opened to “recruiting” of instructors. That resulted in the following list:

<u>Sub-Element</u>	<u>Volunteer Instructor</u>
01. Rules	Gallup
02. Op Practice	Wright
03. Propagation	Halbert
04. Radio Practices	Emily Wallace
05. Electricity	Pleace
06. Components	Pleace
07. Circuits	Gibby
08. Signals	Gordon
09. Antennas	Brett Wallace

00. Safety
Antenna Build

Bledsoe
Gibby

- 3. REVIEW OF AARP/IP DOCUMENTS HURRICANES IAN AND NICOLE.** Brett Wallace, author of the AAR/IP, discussed the strengths of the group that emerged from the storm activations of October and November. Improvements that the group needs to make were discussed, and they are in the AAR/IP. These included addressing the EOC radio room's VHF interference, which made it impracticable to use VHF phone and digital transceivers at the same time. Since this problem was noted in October, the problem has been fixed by installing, cabling, and adjusting of two notch filters at the EOC. Testing has demonstrated that simultaneous phone and digital VHF operation is now possible. The next issue is simple: experience in Ian showed that it is not a good idea to run any kind of net out of the EOC radio room. This will be addressed simply by not conducting nets in the future at that venue. The issue of accountability for expensive County property came up. This had to do with the deployment and redeployment of the broadband mobile web kit; we have now identified that we need a specific protocol for this. Agreement that we must discuss with the EOC, since the issue is one within their province. D Herding needs to recognize problem and devise solution so that he is the one who directs demobilization. Halbert noted three areas for improvement from Ian which were fixed by the time we activated for Nicole or can be fixed using the ideas that here follow. Winlink had P2P failure – since then fixed. Goboxes not set up for Winlink...this may be something best done by individual operators bringing their own PC/soundcard interface. KX4Z will make cables so that this can be done; VHF Winlink packet did not work. It turns out that the fix for this was a setting in Soundmodem: the DCD needed the slider almost all the way to the left, not the right. We were unable to sign forms electronically, so the solution is on the table for the ARES meeting of today's date (electronic signatures on our own ICS 214); KX4Z got signatures from attendees and then emailed a scanned ICS214 creation that now includes the individual operator's signature. Headsets for the EOC to allow for operator isolation from background noise and distraction; Samsung HP30 – these will be low-fatigue headsets that will work. We have discovered that the EOC's IC-7300 settings need to be checked every time the transceiver is used, because the settings will change without anyone specifically changing them; training needed so that operators will know exactly what to do to fix. Equipment forms required by the county; county needs a form we're not familiar with; if op brings own equipment, then it's a 218; for county equipment it's a 214. Group approved the edited/amended AAR/IP
- 4. DOCUMENT SIGNATURES AND 214 ELECTRONIC CREATION.** Laid out the background of the issue. Winlink people won't help with creating electronic signatures. We need a "radio" way to do this, so we can send by radio to an activation documents section, instead of delivering hard copy to EOC, etc. KX4Z obtained signatures from attendees that he scanned and placed in fillable ICS214's modified for our group's use, with individual electronic signatures. KX4Z sent them by email to each individual, who now has an individually fillable but electronically signed 214 that can be transmitted to the County documents specialist by radio/email.
- 5. DIGIPEATER AND VARA FM PERFORMANCE AND UPDATE.** KX4Z and AA3YB described the very successful operation of the new VARA FM digipeater on the 550' Channel 20 tower. KX4Z built and installed the digipeater system – the result is spectacular. KX4Z sent 30kB uncompressed file through the tower digipeater to NH2KW. This took 2 minutes – it would have taken far more than 10 minutes by packet. And the same dummy form was sent in a docx. Compressed version of 15 kB which took only 90 seconds. All of this means that our

operators, using Vara FM and the 550' tower digipeater, can send much larger files than before, and do so quickly and from likely almost any location in the County. A tremendous step forward thanks to KX4Z!

6. **FIELD DAY 2023 INITIAL PLANNING DISCUSSION.** AA3YB and KX4Z discussed the two principle organizing principles so far derived for running FD 2023: concentration of all transceivers and antennas, in one building with coax to all operational antennas going out from that one central location; or separation of transceivers and antennas, spreading them out, and running them remotely using control software on PCs and our mesh network system. The first method, concentration, involves locating everyone in the main building with coax/antenna going out to an antenna “farm” that is configured so as to present a low-risk environment to the visiting public (no tripping hazards, etc) The second method, “distributed,” spreads out the transceivers to the edges of the 1000' circle, and from each other, then using Team Viewer and mesh system to operate the transceivers spread out to the boundary of the 1000' radius. AA3YB offered to run a site visit for 1300 on 22 January, a Sunday. This satisfied the group's concern that it was premature to fix on an organizing principle for our FD without having a good idea of what the site looks like in person. So the issue of the organizational principle is on the table for later discussion The next idea discussed was an expanded STEM outreach; Must discuss with EOC issues of public usage of the parking lot, etc for last weekend in Junea. Emily will look at issues of having us as a group that kids can get volunteer points for helping for our FD. Bledsoe will work issues of getting a proclamation that will get us constitutional officials. Clearly, the issue of getting our use and public use deconflicted is an issue. Worth pursuing. Huckstep's concern is that taking on the STEM outreach diverts us from our EMCOMM issue, and so he is cautioning against mission creep – emergency communications is what we're about, but don't let this take away from our preparation; visible venue. Struggles will be with doing this event with large crowds. The sentiment was echoed by other meeting attendees. It is the Secretary's sense that the consensus favors “staying in our lane” and not expanding our FD activity, especially if we run a distributed model operation. Given the time we have to work these points, the issues are tabled for the next meetings.

7. **ADJOURN** at 2040, 14 December 2044