

# **Alachua ARES/NFARC/NF4AC Clubs**

## **MINUTES**

**JANUARY 11, 2023**

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

Gordon Gibby  
Leland Gallup  
Jim Bledsoe  
Susan Halbert  
Steve Panachi  
David Huckstep  
Eric Pleace  
Vann Chesney  
Jeff Capehart  
Dean Covey  
Earl McDow  
Dalton Herding  
Reid Tillery  
Mike Hasselbeck  
Wendell Wright

**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 DECEMBER 2022 MINUTES.** Minutes approved with exception that the headphones at the EOC are SAMSON HP 30, from Amazon.
- 2. ELECTION OF OFFICERS OF NF4RC AND NF4AC.** President for NFARC is David Huckstep; President of NF4AC is Gordon Gibby; VP of NFARC is Eric Pleace; VP of NF4AC is Wendell Wright; Treasurer of both NF4AC and NFARC is Susan Halbert; Secretary for both NFARC and NF4AC is Leland Gallup.
- 3. CHIGGER ANTENNA UPDATE.** Gordon Gibby, Leland Gallup, and Eric Pleace assembled in early January for a work party to assess and repair the EOC amateur/SHARES HF antennas, known in our ARES group as the Chigger Antennas, in dishonor of the horrible beasts that attack the unwary antenna worker during the warmer times of the year. Review showed that the wires for the OCF are actually in good shape – the “short” east leg of the OCF drops down sharply from the balun, which led us to believe that that end needed raising: it does not. Raised the OCF balun, which is now higher than in past two years. We also have a backup rope to raise the OCF. So...the OCF is fine. Halbert brought up the issue of having a ladder to get up and over the wall separating the EOC building and the woodlot behind, where the antennas are hung in the trees. This is still an issue. Suggestions is that we acquire two ladders and store in the EOC. This will allow use of one ladder on each side of the fence to get over. Also cleaned up the cabling and wires so they were free of vines, etc. With respect to the back up End Fed...the

ground had been incorrectly attached. The wire is in good shape; need to solder connections to the antenna instead of using banana. New ground rod planned. Gibby did SWR for the OCF as with rehung balun. The SWR graph shows that the SWR for the band range to 10m is as anticipated (bad on 40m), but it is tunable on all the frequencies we would want to use, including the SHARES frequencies. The End Fed is much more a ham-only antenna, and can NOT be used on the SHARES between 5 and 6 or between 8 and 9 MHz. Fundamentally, the backup endfed antenna is working well. For Wednesday check in on the 10<sup>th</sup>, we were able to contact SHARES national and regional well direct, no relay needed, which we have never before experienced, so the antenna is working well.

4. **REVIEW OF GENERAL CLASS COURSE 7 AND 8 JAN 23.** Gallup put out overview of the course. Why did we not get any licensees to show up? We had publication through a variety of media. For students the timing may have been somewhat off, because college students are just coming back to class. More than 50% of US licensees have tech only and don't go beyond. Gallup offered the idea of a 2.0 hour intro to ham radio class at EOC with slides and demos. Bledsoe said that after Field Day we should offer a technician level course. Pleace said we were lucky with who showed up, and that if all worked nevertheless. Gibby sent a number of emails out that may have culled the original signups. Bledsoe suggested EOC push ads for our courses. Herding said that we might offer through SERTRAC, and thus gain a target pool of EMCOMM-types who may be interested in obtaining amateur radio licenses.
5. **REVIEW OF HURRICANES 2022 AAR/IP.** Wallace not here. Gibby recited a number of improvement items from the review. We should do Satphone training; Winlink failure was mis setting of a control on a computer; did not have way to send data on go-boxes. We've made cables, we need lunch n lab to make cables and use own Signalinks and computers; Headphone issue – we tried to plug into GPS on the Yeasu dual bands. Now works given that we understand proper port. We've now got duplexer cans to solve interference. We've now got way to send signed forms. For a more robust VHF data system in our county, we now now have a digipeater at 550' so we can better send data. Headsets for the HF side of the room – we've got several there at EOC and on way. We have had an issue with the IC-7300 oddly changing communication settings without someone actually “hitting the wrong button.” Gibby discovered and resolved issue with ICOM preset settings. Email address for sending deployment documentation such issue to now stop unexplained setting changes; email address for sending emails – outstanding. Halbert said that the net control issue has now been resolved by moving out the NCS functions from the EOC. Demobilization issue – you plan for demob from the beginning; we have no good way of getting go-boxes back to EOC. People go off shift and there is a breakdown in demob planning. Herding says that sending an email for the messages will require direct to the doc specialist, and that can change. Bottom line...creation of a generic doc email address. Herding says that it's not going to happen. So we might have to have field personnel email to our “ARES supervisor,” who then turns it over to the documentation specialist. [ARES@alachuacounty.us](mailto:ARES@alachuacounty.us) may be the good target to which things can be sent. On go box deployments – we need more batteries to support the deployments, since power from “the wall” may not happen.
6. **FIELD DAY 2023 ANTENNA IDEAS.** Antenna two on our proposal will not work. Antenna three is on the back of the building, and that is what can be used to run an HF wire up high up to an oak tree. Antenna 4 runs southeast. GOTA trailer can use a number of trees. All antennas above head height. Gibby described the overall concept. 22 Jan walkabout cancelled by Gallup; alternate date to be established.

7. **MOVING ICS-214s BY VHF WINLINK** Challenge is to send a practice 214 to NF4AC. This is the training ICS 214 on the website. Send in by Winlink to any local gateway. Every badged person should be able to accomplish this. This is a Word doc.
8. **ALACHUA EMD/EOC REQUEST FOR ARES AID MAR 1 2023 EXERCISE.** Dalton Herding described the exercise. Functional exercise. Simulated reunification center, EOC, and broad range of local partners in a progressive exercise. Enough people to CONTROL the exercise is what Dalton is looking for: actor controllers (people to direct the actors in what they should be doing); Simulation cell personnel – you’ll have an outline of what to say when players call the sim cell. Prescribed details that will be provided. We will not be provided too complicated roles, with positions that are too difficult. Herding wants to make this manageable. This is a tailored exercise with core functions. The complexity of the positions are such that Dalton would like one on one meetings with us to get us up to speed. Will be available on weekends for these one on one training sessions. Actual exercise time is three hours. Gallup, Gibby, Huckstep, Wright, Halbert, Pleace, Bledsoe, and Covey have agreed to help. Another two would be helpful.
9. **RED CROSS ANTENNAS.** We have been asked to take down antennas that are at the old 6<sup>th</sup> street. John Reynolds has asked us. A group of people took the equipment out, but the antennas have not been removed.
10. **ADJOURN** at 2041, 11 January 2023