

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

## **MINUTES**

**March 8, 2023**

Attendance: 20. Meeting held in person at the Queen of Peace Catholic Community and also held via ZOOM.

Gordon Gibby  
Leland Gallup  
Gordon Beattie  
Susan Halbert  
Wendell Wright  
Craig Fugate  
Jeff Capehart  
Earl McDow  
Dean Covey  
Stuart Reisner  
Jim Bledsoe  
Reid Tillery  
David Huckstep  
Alice Huckstep  
Vann Chesney  
David Fox NN4DF Zoom  
Mike Schaeffer KD4INH Zoom  
Mike Hasselbeck WB2FKO Zoom  
Amy Woods Zoom  
Rosemary Jones

**Introductions.** From 1830 until 1903 when the meeting commenced. The NFARC/NF4AC radio club met for this month in person at Queen or Peace Catholic Community and via Zoom.

### **1. INTRODUCTION/APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 2023 MINUTES/SET**

**RESCHEDULING.** Minutes approved. Jeff Capehart discussed the hours the group has put in for the month of February. The SET rescheduled from last October has been rescheduled for April 22. Discussion of the injects for the SET and where they are. Susan Halbert gave a very brief off-the-cuff overview...let Susan know if anyone wants to participate in the SET. Waldo EOC is also going to be folded in to the exercise. KX4Z. Earl McDow, Rosemary, Reid Tillery, David Huckstep, Alice Huckstep, Wendell, Gibby, Bledsoe, Capehart, Susan Halbert, Amy Woods, Gordon Beattie (possible) – these are all participants so far, as indicated at this meeting.

### **2. PROPOSED FUNCTIONAL EXERCISE VHFGTMO. VIS WINLINK AND VOICE**

**PROGRESS.** Reid Tillery led off the meeting with a talk on his proposed exercise. A number of slides were shown on the TV screen. Reid says this is a “functional exercise,” not a full scale exercise. No date established yet. Reid showed on a white board the proposed architecture for the exercise. Scenario for the exercise is that comms to the outlying areas of the county are out, and that in such a disaster people might have a desire to communicate their status to loved one/s

families outside the disaster area. The focus of the exercise, then, is not support for a “served agency” so much as service to the public. Concept is to serve outlying areas of the county, and to get health and welfare messages out, even if this need cannot be served only by VHF – especially since the scenario calls for the repeaters on the local towers to be unavailable. The solution in this problem set may include mobile digipeaters. On the HF side, the Waldo Radio Room will have an HF radio on a voice net as part of the exercise. They will be able to take HF voice; VHF simplex to a VHF data station. Local helper stations will act as catchment points; from here messages will be delivered to the transmission points (LHS stations). Reid discussed the signal paths that would allow remote stations out of the disaster zone (HF) to take the traffic and get it out (internet, phone, etc). The Waldo Radio room can be a great asset to Alachua County because amateurs there CAN take H/W traffic (unlike the Alachua County EOC). Local helper stations should have an HF radio and know how to use Winlink. All of this is in the plan that is now on the NFARC website. Reid discussed intermediate stations that can reach, e.g., the Alachua EOC, and have both VHF and HF capability. Fictional “shelters” are also part of the exercise. KX4Z stressed that this exercise complements and fills out the use of amateurs to serve the public as well as the “served agencies” that we devote all our attention to. This exercise answers a need for disaster assistance to the public at large especially in underserved areas of the county. Discussion of the format for messages to improve traffic accountability. Proposed date of May 13<sup>th</sup> (Saturday).

3. **EOC STATION PORTABILITY.** The issue is this: we have a need for HF capability in the event that the EOC relocates or operates from a COOP site. So the subject that has been on the table for some time is simple: with current EOC radio room HF equipment, create/build a deployable go box. The second approach is to procure and build a complete backup station that duplicates the essentials of the already installed HF station at the EOC. Such a backup station is just that – redundancy, and also would be built for instant deployability. Craig Fugate recommends the backup COOP HF station be placed remotely at a fire station so that there is physical separation and real redundancy. Spare HF antennas with the remotely stored HF backup station. What and how for EOC HF station will be moved or replicated for use at the Kanapaha Veterans Park COOP center is to be further discussed.
4. **TOWER TRAILER PLANNING AND PROGRESS.** Stuart Reisner described KX4Z’s trailer, and how a device could be placed on the trailer. Yoke in the middle of the trailer bed, with a steel plate that would allow a pivot point for raising the tower...tower base would be there on the plate and that would be the pivot point, Stuart showed a diagram of an actual design for the concept.
5. **COUNTY EM REUNIFICATION FUNCTIONAL EXERCISE DESCRIBED.** AA3YB quickly walked through the results of the March 1, Alachua EM-led Reunification functional exercise. ARES volunteers were asked by EM to participate not as communicators, but as EM support staff and controllers. AA3YB laid out the fictional scenario, and talked about the variety of law enforcement, health service, medical examiner, fire rescue, Shands Hospital, and others participating in the exercise. Perhaps 50 “players” from a variety of agencies were at the Martin Luther King, Jr, MultiPurpose Center, which was acting as the scenario reunification center. This is a first, and demonstrates the merits of Alachua badged volunteers being trained in NRF/NIMS/ICS “language” and processes. The four ARES volunteers were Wendell Wright, David Huckstep, Eric Pleace, and Leland Gallup. All were at the reunification center. All performed whatever support task was assigned to them by the EM Chief Controller at the site, Ms. Jen Grice (also the Director, Alachua EM). The EM department was effusive in praise

of our ARES volunteers: if another piece of evidence was needed to show how thoroughly our group is now integrated with Alachua EM, this is it.

6. **LAB N'LUNCH MARCH 25<sup>th</sup>**. Non-resonant random wire with 9:1 balun. KX4Z described the concept of a NON resonant wire connected to a 9:1 balun. Higher losses than a resonant-ish antenna. Counterpoise useful. Likely to use antenna tuner. End Fed. Described configurations, how to mount on a mast. Six people signed up. Send messages to KX4Z to sign up for sure.
7. **ADJOURN** at 2045, 8 March 2023.