

Middle Peninsula Amateur Radio Club, Inc.
General Meeting Minutes
February 4, 2020

Call to Order / Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 7:02pm by President Kenny Skirvin (KM4KZC) with 21 members and 7 guests present. Kenny opened the meeting with photos of the recent Squalo building workshop and thanks to Jerry for providing it. He then asked for attendees to introduce themselves, answering whether they went to Frost Fest. In addition, he asked attendees to sound off as to whether they are ARRL members. To retain our ARRL affiliation, we must meet minimum membership requirements.

The attendees responded as requested, with a large fraction of the members in attendance being ARRL members and several having attended Frost Fest. In addition, we had several guests in attendance.

President's Report

Former President Bill Conkling (NR4C) provided his President's report reviewing the activities and achievements of the club last year. Bill provided printed handouts to be included in the club record and had distributed copies to the club membership via the email reflector prior to the meeting. He indicated that when he first began composing his thoughts for the report, he was concerned that the club hadn't done that much. But, as the report came together, it became clear that the club was in fact quite active last year and had accomplished many things – special events, growth in membership, antenna parties, meeting presentations and W5YI activities all were excellent. All in all he is very pleased with the accomplishments and activities of the club under his guidance.

Kenny gave kudos to all the outgoing officers and extended the thanks of the club to them for their service and for a nice hand off to the incoming board.

Secretary's and Treasurer's Reports

Minutes from the January General Meeting were distributed to the membership via the email reflector prior to the meeting. Treasurer Will (K4MI) presented the treasurer's report which was also previously distributed electronically. Roger entered a motion to accept both the minutes and the treasurer's report which was seconded by Jerry and carried unanimously by the membership.

Proposed Budget

Will then reviewed the proposed budget for the coming year. Because of the change in the fiscal year, the amounts in the budget were pro-rated to 75% of their full amounts. This approach generated some discussion among the membership since there are some incomes and expenses that fall entirely within the shortened period, and yet appear as only 75% of their expected amount due to the pro-rating. Ultimately, the consensus was that this is merely an

estimate of the year's coming expenses and that the effort required to make it more accurately reflect the expected cashflow might not be worthwhile and that overall, the pro-rated amounts would cause everything to work out once the next fiscal year arrived. Will Grant summarized the situation nicely by describing the proposed budget as imperfect, but it did accomplish its intended mission, so he moved to accept the proposed budget as presented. His motion was seconded by Bobby. The motion was approved by the membership with one nay.

Middle Peninsula ARES

Weekly ARES Net – Will reports good participation with 12-15 check-ins and a peak of more than 20. The net control operators ask participants about their state of preparedness – particularly regarding the availability of batteries and / or generators.

W5YI Testing:

Joy reported a good session this time. 3 people were expected but 10 showed up. There were 7 VEs available which helped. They granted 8 new tech licenses KO4BJT through KO4BJY and KE0ZBL. One individual didn't pass but was not discouraged and is expected back. Of the 8 techs that passed, three went on and passed the general test. Another individual arrived to take the General exam (having already been issued a Tech license) and passed, upgrading his license to General. Joy suggested that even though individuals passing the exam are given a complementary first year's membership in the club, she suggests they not be added to the roster until they submit a completed application. The next testing session is scheduled for March 28th, starting registrations at 9:00 am, with the test starting at 9:30.

Jerry reported that testing at Frost Fest was apparently overwhelmed by the number of individuals who came to take the test. The tests were administered electronically. Adopting electronic testing for us would be difficult because we would need a computer for each individual testing. One of our recent members – Scott Mecca (K7TTN), indicated that he is the Director of Technology for GCPS and, as such, he might be able to make arrangements for the testing group to use a computer classroom at Abingdon Elementary in order to have sufficient computers for testing. This is a topic that we can discuss in the future if desired, but Joy expressed some concern/reservation about such a move and the complication it would add.

Old Business:

- Old Amplifier Repair -- Kenny shipped the unit to the company for repair.
- Field Day -- Kenny got the permit for Abingdon Park for Field Day.
- Walter Reed Special Event – Will Grant has worked with the Fairfield Foundation (managers of Walter Reed's Birthplace) to arrange for this year's Walter Reed Special Event on April 18th in conjunction with the historic gardens tour.

New Business:

By-Laws Change –

To shift the treasurer's report to match new fiscal year. Proposing that each year's "Proposed Budget" be submitted at the October Board Meeting to be available to the membership at the November Business meeting. Kenny will post the proposed change on groups.io and hold discussion/vote at the April 7th General Meeting.

Comments –

Bill (NR4C) posed the question – who do we want to propose the budget for the coming year.. the new treasurer or the old one. Discussion suggested that the old treasurer is better able to create a budget based on experience of the current year, rather than expecting a new treasurer to propose a budget upon first taking office. Hopefully groups.io will provide an ideal way to host the conversation about this topic.

Electronic Communications

We need to tidy up our electronic communications to ensure that the club email address is properly monitored, and that online forms are submitted to the correct officer, etc.

Insurance Inventory –

Kenny distributed the inventory of equipment for the insurance policy via groups.io, asking that everyone review it for accuracy/completeness. The plan is to have the list finalized so that we can update the insurance policy as needed before the thunderstorm season starts.

Banking

Historically, only the treasurer really had access to the club's bank account. At the board meeting, this was discussed and decided that a second person should also have access. Further we decided that Roger (K14QAU) should serve in that capacity. In general, we should select a second individual that is in the same election cycle as the treasurer in order that the necessary changes only need to be made at the bank once for changes to both individuals every two years. We considered staggering them for continuity, but it seemed that this was more trouble for little benefit.

Keith (N4KDJ) is the treasurer for a non-profit organization and banks with Chesapeake Bank. He suggested that we might consider changing banks. That doing so might be more convenient for the current and future treasurers. Kenny said that since we are going to be adding a person to the account, this might be a good time to explore the option to see if there is enough advantage to warrant changing banks.

Calendar / Upcoming Activities

Need Programs/Topics

Kenny mentioned that we need topics for presentations and after-test sessions. He suggested that a “show and tell” might be a good option for a presentation slot and he’d like to see us do another fox hunt. Joy reminded everyone that we even have a fox to give away to the winner!

Virginia ARES PIC Presentation

Wayne Rogers (N1WR), one of the guests in attendance is the ARES Emergency Coordinator for Lancaster County and a member of the Virginia ARES Strategic Planning Team. He indicated that Ed Gibbs (KW4GF), the Public Information Coordinator for Virginia ARES would be interested in attending and providing a presentation.

List of Upcoming Events

- 2/8 Club breakfast at Olivia’s, 7:30 – 9:00AM
- 3/3 Club Meeting / Program?
- 3/14 Club Breakfast at Olivia’s, 7:30 – 9:00AM
- 3/28 W5YI testing session: 9:00 – 10:30 – Need after-session event
- 4/7 Club Meeting / Program?
- 4/11 Club Breakfast at Olivia’s, 7:30 – 9:00AM
- 4/18 Walter Reed Special Event
- 4/29 Board Meeting, location: tbd
- 5/5 Club Meeting / Program?
- 5/9 Club Breakfast at Olivia’s, 7:30 – 9:00AM
- 5/16 Tour de Chesapeake
- 5/30 W5YI Testing Session – need after session event
- 6/2 Club Meeting / Program? (FD Program?)
- 6/13 Club Breakfast at Olivia’s, 7:30 – 9:00AM
- Field Day: 6/27 – 6/28 – Kenny will contact the park folks to reserve the shelter for these dates.

Program Coordinator Position

Bill (NR4C), said that at some point in the past, the club had a volunteer position as “Program Coordinator” who was responsible for lining up programs for meetings. Bill hoped that someone would be willing to volunteer for such a position. Kenny raised a call for volunteers but nobody responded immediately. Kenny indicated that we would leave this as an open invitation/ongoing search for someone to serve in this capacity.

Raffle

No raffle

Program: ARES. By Roger West (KI4QAU)

Roger became involved in the club back in October specifically to get ARES back into the Gloucester County EOC. While there are lots of opportunities to have fun in Amateur Radio as described by Will Grant in his recent presentation, there is also a serious side to amateur radio in the communication resources that we can provide in times of emergency. Through ARES, radio amateurs can help to fill a critical need in the country's emergency management infrastructure.

Roger has amassed extensive experience in emergency management and related topics within the federal government and the private sector. Specifically, he served as ARES Emergency Coordinator for Portsmouth ARES for several years. He is currently very active in the Gloucester County community and is on the county's Local Emergency Planning Commission. From this vantage point, he can see substantial weaknesses in the county's emergency management infrastructure that amateur radio operators, working under ARES can help to address.

Nationwide, the emergency management infrastructure has changed considerably in recent years. Today, participation requires that volunteers undertake formal training, receive background checks, be issued credentials, and participate in a formal organization.

To familiarize them with the situation, Roger invited Kenny (KM4KZC) and Jerry (K4SKD) to attend a recent Emergency Management meeting with him. He envisions the MPARC/ARES effort to be similar to the one he helped to develop in Portsmouth, with a team of motivated volunteers and equipment and supplies provided by federal grants. He is familiar with the process of applying for and obtaining such grants for these purposes. At present, a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is being written that will define the details of the relationship between ARES and Gloucester EM system.

Roger described the way in which such a relationship might work and how it would benefit the community. He fostered a conversation between the attendees, answering questions along with Mr. Rogers, several members who have considerable emergency management experience and the several guests in attendance who are CERT volunteers.

Roger closed by thanking everyone for their participation and encouraging individuals to get the training and to get involved in this effort.

Adjournment

Will (K4MI) entered a motion to adjourn the meeting. it was seconded by several attendees and carried by the membership. Kenny adjourned the meeting at 9:02 PM.

Attendance

Members

Tom, K6AET

Bill, N4RC

Ken, KN4MTE
Dan, WG4F
Bobby, K4BC
Will, W3SG
John, AI4QQ
Will, K4MI
Keith, N4KDJ
Wes, AI4FH
Dave, KN0S
Alan, KM4VTT
Mack, WB2PCV
Elizabeth, K5ELM
Scott, K7TTN
Joy, W2JMS
Kenny, KM4KZC
Jerry, K4SKD
Roger, KI4QAU
Marty, WM4MW
Danny, KW4LQ

Guests

Derek LeVie, KA7FBI
Wayne Rogers, N1WR
Trevor Nichols
Bob Nichols
Marianne Nichols
Adam Jordan
Stacey Turner

Submitted by MPARC Secretary, Marty Wise, WM4MW, February 29, 2020