

Middle Peninsula Amateur Radio Club, Inc.
General Meeting Minutes
March 3, 2020

Call to Order / Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by President Kenny Skirvin (KM4KZC) with 18 members and 1 guest present. Kenny showed photos of the repeater, which had failed recently, highlighting the burned area of the capacitor on the circuit board. He then called for introductions, asking a non-radio related question – “Have you ever met anyone famous?” The members introduced themselves, each providing stories of the famous people they had met in their lives. Needless to say, this provided a bunch of very interesting stories. Kenny also welcomed Pedro (KM4INA) who some of us had heard on the air, but who was in attendance for the first time.

Secretary’s and Treasurer’s Reports

Minutes from the February General Meeting were distributed to the membership via the email reflector prior to the meeting. Mark (N1LO) suggested one correction to the minutes wherein Mack McKinney (WB2PCV) was listed as “George (WB2PCV)” in the list of members in attendance and should have been shown as “Mack (WB2PCV)”. In addition, prior to the meeting, Joy (W2JMS) had offered a couple of other corrections which had already been incorporated into the published minutes. Mark’s correction will be made to the published minutes.

Treasurer Will (K4MI) presented the treasurer’s report which was also previously distributed electronically. In summary, we started the month with \$4,926.88, spent \$286.89 for the repeater amplifier repair, leaving \$4649.99. Roger entered a motion to accept both the minutes and the treasurer’s report which was seconded by Jerry. There was no further discussion and the motion was approved unanimously by the membership.

Middle Peninsula ARES

Weekly ARES Net – Will thanked everyone for their participation in the weekly net. He reminded everyone to check their batteries, generators, etc. to maintain a state of preparedness. He also suggested if we have weather radios, be sure we are able to receive official weather bulletins. In the wake of a series of strong tornados in Nashville the previous night, we are reminded that it is necessary to always be on the lookout and always be ready for emergencies. Mark (N1LO) added that Norbert was scheduled to call the net the previous week, but that at that time, one of his dogs had just been attacked and killed by a wild animal (perhaps a bobcat?), so he was unavailable to do so. After a couple of minutes, Will realized the problem and came online to call the net in Norbert’s place, and everything proceeded as usual. We all offer our condolences to Norbert for the loss of his dog.

Kenny asked Roger (KI4QAU) for comment on any recent progress regarding MPARES and the Gloucester Counter Emergency Management System. Roger had been on vacation in Florida,

but while away, he received an MOU that will form the basis of a working relationship between MPARC and the county. The ARRL is currently restructuring ARES and currently, there is no ARRL recognized ARES Emergency Coordinator for Gloucester County or Mathews. Due to the current need, the county is willing to move forward with a direct relationship with the club until the details can be worked out with the ARRL. Roger reached out to the ARRL and is expecting them to get back to him shortly. He will report on the status once he hears from them. Mark related a story from last year in which there was a hurricane preparedness exercise in which MPARC was ready and willing to participate, but the county did not allow us to participate. Roger indicates that he is aware of there being problems in the past and has been working to overcome those problems and forge a new relationship to get things moving again.

W5YI Testing:

Joy(W2JMS) indicated that aside from the Nichols family who were in attendance at last month's meeting who expressed interest, she has not heard from anyone who is planning to attend to be tested. She indicated that this is not unusual, and someone may show up anyway.

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Old Business:

- Old Amplifier– Repaired for \$286.89
- Will has updated the insurance equipment inventory. He also made sure that they have the club's PO box address for any future correspondence.
- Will (K4MI) also had the SQL cards from the Capt. John Smith which he passed around for everyone to look at. They then were given to the secretary to be added to the club's collection. Will also indicated that he had responded to all of them.
- Roger will be granted access to the club's bank account so that we have two members who have access.
- Will has been working on gathering information regarding alternative banks with the thought that we may transfer our account to a bank that is more convenient, and with reduced fees. Keith (N4KDJ) has had good dealings with Chesapeake Bank and has provided some information on options with them.
- Walter Reed event coming up on April 18th. Kenny will start a discussion thread on groups.io to discuss plans for the event. He pointed out that this year, Mark (N1LO) will not be available to coordinate antenna installation, etc. Mark has offered to allow the club to use the same antenna as last year – a dual band, dual dipole 2m/40m. We just need someone to handle putting up a mast. Jerry (K4SKD) volunteered to coordinate antenna deployment for the event. In addition, Will (K4MI) contacted QST to get it listed in the magazine's list of upcoming special events. Kenny mentioned that he saw

something about the associated garden event in the Gazette Journal. Dr. Dave (KN0S) said that the garden week event was publicized, including the Walter Red Birthplace event – with “ham radio expected”.

New Business:

By-Laws Change –

Standing proposal to change the reporting/election year to line up better with the recently changed fiscal year. The proposal calls for the proposed budget to be submitted at the October meeting. This allows the outgoing treasurer to prepare the budget proposal, to be ready for the incoming treasurer. We plan to vote on these proposed changes at the April general meeting.

Program Chair –

We are still seeking a volunteer to serve as program chair, to line up interesting programs for the meetings. So far, nobody has expressed interest in this. In the interim, Kenny is still seeking volunteers for programs for the upcoming meetings. Marty (WM4MW) will give a presentation on 3D printing tonight following the business portion of the meeting. Kenny again asked for volunteers and nobody has responded yet.

Possible Program

Will commented that Kenny recently mentioned that Michael (KN4MTF) asked recently for a presentation discussing techniques for mobile radio use while on travel. Will (K4MI) mentioned he might be able to check with Michael about what he was looking for and he might be able to prepare a presentation along those lines. Kenny mentioned that Jerry (K4SKD) had suggested doing it as a sort of show and tell with members detailing their individual approaches to the problems associated with operating mobile while traveling.

Donated Equipment

David Dunville (N4GUA) kindly donated his ham radio gear to the club. Marty met with him and picked it up and currently has it stored at his house. Kenny talked with the board and everyone seemed to think it was a good approach to raffle the items off over the course of the upcoming meetings. Except for the IC-718 HF rig, power supply and tuner. This might be set aside to be placed into the school, or possibly in the EOC for ARES use. So, for now, the plan is to just hold onto it for that prospective use. Jerry mentioned Rich (K4TJA) still has the two metal suitcases previously used to hold the old club radios. We should store the system in one of those to protect it. Bobby asked if one of the power supplies was better than the one currently in use for the repeater, it might be a good idea to use one of them for that. Mark indicated that the current repeater supply is a big Astron 50A rack mounted unit, so these small switchers would not be a good option. A club member (might have been Jerry) said he might be able to get ahold of another of the larger units to hang onto as a spare for the repeater. Kenny wrote Mr. Dunville a nice thank you letter acknowledging his generous donation.

Kudos to Mark –

In the course of discussion of the repeater's history, Tim (N4XND) pointed out that Mark had given many (20 years) of great service regarding maintenance and operation of the repeater and offered his thanks and appreciation for his service. The club agreed judging by their spontaneous applause.

New Repeater Amplifier

The recently installed new repeater amplifier had problems recently, an external fuse holder having melted and failed. In addition, a small ceramic capacitor failed internally. The manufacturer approved our replacing the capacitor ourselves without affecting its warranty status to avoid sending the unit back and forth to California for repair. Kenny and Mark fashioned a new power lead with inline fuse to replace the failed fuse holder. After consultation with the manufacturer, their recommendation as against the use of an inline fuse because of these kinds of problems. Apparently, the contacts in the holder became resistive and generated enough heat under the load of the amplifier, causing the failure. Danny (KW4LQ) has a 220pF cap in his stock that should serve as an appropriate replacement for the failed chip cap. If there are still problems, it can be sent to the manufacturer to have them go through it in detail. Several members expressed some surprise at the idea that we would have to pay to ship it back to them for repair. Mark ordered a manual reset inline automotive circuit breaker and will configure that inline in place of the fuse. The more solid connections of the breaker should avoid the contact resistance problem presumably encountered with the fuse holder.

New Business from the Floor –

Kenny called for any other new business from the floor. Nobody had any further new business for the meeting.

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 / 3D Printing Program – Marty Wise
- 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 / Mobile Ops
- 4/11 Club Breakfast at Olivia's, 7:30 – 9:00AM
- 4/18 Walter Reed Special Event
- 4/29 Board Meeting
- 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 called for suggestions for activities following the test sessions. Will (K4MI) suggested another fox hunt sometime soon. But, this should probably wait for better/more certain good weather. Joy mentioned having a discussion session / town hall style meeting to discuss things in more detail than is allowed in the usual meetings.

Kenny mentioned that the 6m Crab Net has been moved to 8:00 PM on Sunday nights (on 50.180MHz). Due to changes in Rich's work schedule, Monday nights just won't work any more.

Will (K4MI) mentioned the Virginia QSO party (<http://www.vaqsoparty.com/>) on the March 21st and 22nd.

Comment

Mark (N1LO) pointed out that for those listening to the repeater on Leap day, Jerry made corrections when the repeater declared it to be March 1st prematurely. He said that Jerry routinely provides service to the club to handle configuration changes to the repeater and has been doing so for many years now and deserves our gratitude. A round of applause went up for Jerry in recognition of this contribution.

Donated Items

During the break, Kenny aired a video of the items donated by Mr. Dunville.

Raffle

Some items from the David Dunhill donation were raffled off.

- 2m mobile mini magnetic whip antenna
- DIY J-Pole antenna
- Reel-type Sanjean portable wire SW antenna
- Small MFJ SWR analyzer

Program: Overview of 3D Printing – By Marty Wise (WM4MW)

Having recently purchased an entry level 3D printer, Marty gave a presentation of his experience with the unit, describing what you might do with a 3D printer and pointing out that getting started in 3D printing was not nearly as expensive or complicated as he originally thought. He discussed some of the basic methods used in 3D printing and the types of units that are available. He reviewed the basic construction and operation of these devices, and provided a number of samples of the work he has done in the past few months with his. A key reason for him was to gain the ability to create custom enclosures for small electronics projects, but he has found lots of other uses as well, ranging from custom mounting fixtures for cameras, cabinets for electronic parts storage, DIY security camera – and lots of cat figurines. He encouraged anyone interested to look into it further. His slide deck is posted on the groups.io site, which contains a number of links and other details that you might find useful if you are interested in learning more about the topic, or even getting one yourself.

Adjournment

Kenny adjourned the meeting about 9:00 PM.

Attendance

Members

David, KK4CNF
Gary, WB2PVJ
Bobby, K4BC
Michael, KN4MTF
Will, K4MI
David, KN0S
Derek, KA7FBI
Mark, N1LO
Mack, WB2PCV
Elizabeth, K5ELM
Scott, K7TTN
Robert, KN4YQV
Tim, N4XND
Joy, W2JMS
Kenny, KM4KZC
Jerry, K4SKD
Roger, KI4QAU
Marty, WM4MW

Guests

Pedro KM4INA

