

Key City Amateur Radio Club Meeting Minutes

Proposed minutes to be approved at the April 2020 meeting.

KCARC Secretary Jacob Bachmeyer, **KE5WHG**

March 9, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 1900 by Allen Brooks, **KF5SPQ**.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Lois Doerschuk, **KF5BAB**.

The invocation was given by John Smith, **KG7VB**.

Members introduced themselves. There were 22 members and 6 guests present.

A motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes and approve them as published was made by John Doerschuk, **KE5OVB** and seconded by John Smith, **KG7VB**.

The motion was carried.

The Treasurer's report was presented by Peg Richard, **KA4UPA** and filed for audit.

Old Business

Field Day

Allen Brooks, **KF5SPQ** reported that we still do not have a location. Jim Chandler, **N5COT** reported that he has been trying a few possibilities, including the parking lot in front of the new police station. Allen Brooks, **KF5SPQ** reported that he is still making efforts to contact the chief of the Hamby Volunteer Fire Department to ask if we could use their fire station as we have done in previous years.

Allen Brooks, **KF5SPQ** again called for a Field Day Planning Committee. Peg Richard, **KA4UPA** mentioned that we may not be able to have food at the event if we hold the event outdoors but volunteered to help with the food if have an appropriate place. Antenna setup and teardown remains an issue that will require planning.

Allen Brooks, **KF5SPQ** volunteered to serve as Public Information Officer for the event.

New Business

Bike Race

The city sent Mike, who began with an apology that the Key City Amateur Radio Club had not been on the bike race checklist. Mike explained that the route has been slightly changed this year to reduce traffic hazards. As usual, the race will start at 1000, with preparations beginning at 0900. The locations on the map were reviewed.

Allen Brooks, **KF5SPQ** will serve as net control. Other members signed up for locations. All should gather at the starting area at 0900 before proceeding to the locations.

Voice procedure for the net will be to use location numbers and to end each transmission with an ID using the operator's callsign.

Presentation by Dale Durham, W5WI

"DX" originated as a term for "distance" in telegraphy. In amateur radio, DX is used to indicate contacts with distant stations. This has led to "DXpeditions" where a group of hams gather portable radios and go to some distant location and others make efforts to contact them.

Even technician-class operators can participate. Not only are a few HF slices available, but the "magic band" more commonly known as "6 meters" is also useful when it is open. There is also the phenomenon of tropospheric ducting, where radio waves propagate surprisingly well along frontal boundaries. This can carry even 2 meters several hundred miles. In brief, DX operations are open to all amateur radio operators and are possible even without using HF, and Dale continued describing further details of DX operations.

A method known as “split” operation is sometimes used where a station will call CQ and mention “listening 10 up” or similar. This means that that station is expecting to be called on a frequency 10 kHz above the frequency on which he is transmitting. Some operators, particularly in Asia, will use split in the other direction, “listening 10 down” instead. 10 kHz is a common split, but 5 kHz is also used. In the past, “wide” split operation was often used for international contacts because the amateur bands were different in different parts of the world.

Another important element of DX operations is logging. Recording date, time, frequency, power, and the other station in a contact was once required, but remains useful even though the regulations have been relaxed. Logs can be very useful to exonerate yourself from claims of interference and are also useful for tracking contacts with the QSL bureaus that are run by the various ARRL-equivalents in various countries. There is a new website called “Logbook of the World” which can correlate logs in near-real-time.

Dale also mentioned the N3FJP logging program we use at field day and the map display it offers. A few other programs were also mentioned including the “DXLab Suite” which “does it all” and is free, but hard to set up.

Dale mentioned “SOTA: Summits on the Air” which is a sort of one-person DXpedition, involving a QRP transmitter and a trip to a mountain summit.

Last weekend was the Worldwide Prefix Sideband Contest, which awarded points for contacting stations with different callsign prefixes. Participating in contests is an easy way to eventually reach DXCC status and is a good way to learn about common propagation patterns, such as the “grey line” where radio signals tend to follow the sunrise or sunset.

Contests are also helpful to the hobby as a whole, since contesting helps to establish that the amateur bands are in use and prevent our frequencies from being reassigned to other uses.

There are various special events, enough that there is usually at least one special event ongoing each weekend. Dale’s favorites are the annual Fourth of July “13 colonies” and the “Route 66 on the Air” events.

Lastly, digital modes are useful even with limited equipment. PSK31 was very popular recently, but FT8 is now more common. Dale compared JT65 to paint drying.

Having no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Dale Durham, **W5WI** and seconded by Peg Richard, **KA4UPA**.

The motion was carried and the meeting adjourned at 2009.