

Key City Amateur Radio Club Meeting Minutes

Approved at the February 2023 meeting

KCARC Secretary Jacob Bachmeyer, **KE5WHG**

January 9, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 1900 by David Andrews, **WB5VIH**.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by David Andrews, **WB5VIH**. The invocation was given by John Bogart, **WX5TX**.

Members introduced themselves. There were 34 members and 1 guest present at the meeting.

Members:

WB5VIH	KE5WHG	KB5NLP	N5JZH
WT5X	WD6FIL	KC5ETW	KI5OUS
KI5YRY	WX5TX	N5TEQ	KF5BAB
KE5OVV	KI5QEU	AL7PB	WB5DUQ
W5JAP	WB5YFW	AI5IY	K5FLD
KI5DHX	KI5GOZ	WL7KS	KG7VB
W5WI	AD5KH	KI5YTG	N5QNL
K2WCS	W5CHS	KI5VCO	KF5ZQB
KJ5DX	KI5YSI		

1 other guest was present

A motion to approve the minutes of the November meeting as published was made by Dale Durham, **W5WI** and seconded by John Smith, **KG7VB**.

The motion was carried.

The Treasurer's report was presented by Tammy Harden, **KB5NLP** and filed for audit.

A motion to donate \$100 to the Hamby VFD, mostly the funds raised at the Christmas Party in excess of food costs, was made by Dale Durham, **W5WI** and seconded by John Smith, **KG7VB**.

The motion was carried.

Old Business

Christmas Party

David Andrews, **WB5VIH** reported that the Christmas party went well.

SkyWARN

Druann Thomas, **N5QNL** reported that the annual SkyWARN training session will be at ACU in the Bible Building at 0900 on February 25th. A group usually gathers for breakfast at the nearby Judge Ely McDonald's at 0800 that morning. She introduced Ron Harden, Jr, **WT5X**, Randy Robinson, **N5JZH**, Bill Shaw, **KJ5DX**, who also help with operations for Abilene SkyWARN. The net control station for Abilene SkyWARN always uses the callsign **K5ABI**. Efforts are normally made to announce SkyWARN activations about 30 minutes in advance.

Bill Shaw, **KJ5DX** answered a question from Tivis Statler, **KI5GOZ** about what SkyWARN actually does, explaining that SkyWARN provides "ground truth" to go with the radar pictures. Druann Thomas, **N5QNL** explained the main functions of net control in a SkyWARN net. Ron Harden, Jr, **WT5X** explained another function of SkyWARN net control: getting the spotters out of the path of approaching extreme weather. Bill Shaw, **KJ5DX** mentioned that a refresher on local Abilene SkyWARN procedures will be the topic of a later session. David Andrews, **WB5VIH** suggested organizing a local SkyWARN mentoring program. Randy Robinson, **N5JZH** noted that one of the important functions of SkyWARN is preventing false alarms based on radar indications.

Minter Park

David Andrews, **WB5VIH** looked into issues related to setting up a demonstration in Minter Park and found that it would be impractical for the club.

Winter Field Day

David Andrews, **WB5VIH** raised the topic. Some members expressed plans to participate individually, but there was no interest in organizing a club event.

Morse Code Class

David Andrews, **WB5VIH** announced plans for a weekly Morse code course beginning at 1800 on February 6th at the South Branch of the Abilene Public Library in the Mall of Abilene. There are 12 seats in the room reserved for the class. Ron Ashmore, **WB5DUQ** asked what speed will be taught; that will be 13WPM. Tivis Statler, **KI5GOZ** asked what current uses are made of Morse code. Mike Roche, **KF5ZQB** noted that CW is popular for DX. Dale Durham, **W5WI** recounted his past efforts learning Morse code, suggesting sending characters at 20WPM but words at 5WPM. David Andrews, **WB5VIH** reminisced about the old procedures for testing for amateur radio licenses.

Fox Hunt

David Andrews, **WB5VIH** outlined plans for a fox hunt and reported that he is building a directional antenna using a tape measure. This led to a brief discussion. Randy Robinson, **N5JZH** noted a past event with a hamburger cookout at the fox location.

New Business

License Study Course

Randy Robinson, **N5JZH** reported plans to hold a General-class study course beginning February 4th. Interested persons should contact Randy Robinson, **N5JZH**. We have obtained the use of a room at Cisco College at 717 Industrial, located near the corner of Industrial and Loop 322. We also have a supply of study guides generously donated in a grant from the ARRL Foundation.

Tammy Harden, **KB5NLP** asked about a future study course for Extra-class, but Randy Robinson, **N5JZH** answered that the Extra-class material is less suitable for the classroom format.

Lois Doerschuk, **KF5BAB** noted past advice for the use of online practice tests. Dale Durham, **W5WI** added that practice tests can help to find sections where more study is needed. Chris Goodnough, **AI5IY** suggested using the hamstudy.org online tests. Randy Robinson, **N5JZH** added that there are also many useful video courses on YouTube.

KCARC Website

Ron Harden, Jr, **WT5X** reported that the domain for the club website had been renewed. A motion to reimburse \$54 for the domain renewal was made by Christopher Smith, **K2WCS** and seconded by John Smith, **KG7VB**.

The motion was carried.

Liability Waivers

David Andrews, **WB5VIH** reported a new problem: amateur radio has traditionally offered assistance free of charge, but now lawyers are making trouble. When checking in at the recent Steam-N-Wheels bike race, we were surprised with a demand for signed waiver forms that included indemnification clauses. Later, it was realized that this could shift unreasonably large liabilities onto us.

Mel Saunders, **AL7PB** asked about the club's liability insurance, and David Andrews, **WB5VIH** answered that club's liability coverage only applies to the club officers and is mostly useless. Dale Durham, **W5WI** explained that the primary purpose of the ARRL club insurance is to satisfy venues for club-sponsored events that want to see insurance coverage and the coverage does not apply when clubs support third-party events. He continued that, while these waiver forms were individual, the City Parks Department sees this as the club providing assistance, and that this issue seems to be part of a broader trend, with a variety of these waivers that he and others have collected, often with identical boilerplate wording.

Christopher Smith, **K2WCS** noted that commercially available worker's compensation policies that cover volunteers exist and this means that declining to cover volunteers is a choice. That is, the city is happy to have our help, but is also happy to hang us out to dry if anything goes wrong.

Ron Harden, Jr, **WT5X** suggested that, if the city is not going to cover us, then we as a club should not participate. David Andrews, **WB5VIH** declared a policy of the club that we will not accept waivers of this type. There was some discussion about whether this should be a formal resolution. Dale Durham, **W5WI** noted that common insurance policies often cited as personal solutions to the issue do not cover participation in organized events.

Christopher Smith, **K2WCS** moved a resolution:

Resolved, that the Key City Amateur Radio Club will not participate in volunteer activities if the coordinating organization does not provide liability and worker's compensation coverage for participating club members.

Ron Harden, Jr, **WT5X** seconded the resolution. Druann Thomas, **N5QNL** suggested insisting on our own indemnification and liability waiver. Randy Robinson, **N5JZH** reiterated the issue of a decision between refusing to sign waivers and insisting that coverage be provided.

John Bogart, **WX5TX** moved to amend the proposed resolution by striking "and worker's compensation" with a second from Ron Harden, Jr, **WT5X** for the amendment. A voice vote was inconclusive, so a vote by show of hands to approve the amendment to the proposed resolution passed the amendment 20-4.

The club then voted on the amended resolution:

Resolved, that the Key City Amateur Radio Club will not participate in volunteer activities if the coordinating organization does not provide liability coverage for participating club members.

The motion for the amended resolution was carried by voice vote.

David Andrews, **WB5VIH** clarified that this applies to participation endorsed by the club and members remain free to do as they wish as individuals, and lamented that this problem "takes the winds out of our sails" with respect to community involvement.

Eat-and-Greet

Randy Robinson, **N5JZH** suggested gathering for an eat-and-greet at TaMolly's at 1800 on January 28th. Consensus supporting this was quickly achieved.

Having no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mel Saunders, **AL7PB** and seconded by Christopher Smith, **K2WCS**.

With no objection, the motion was carried and the meeting adjourned at 2019.