

Humboldt Amateur Radio Club

Minutes of Meeting – May 4, 2021

Officers Present: President: Anthony Wiese, **KG6LHW** / **KK6SYJ** / Secretary: Sherry Lisby **KM6YRQ** / **Position open:** R.A.I.N. Newsletter Editor / Past President: Peter Esko **W6IES**

President Anthony Wiese **KG6LHW** chaired this month's meeting and called the meeting to order at 19:01 local time on the Humboldt Amateur Radio Club repeater due to the COVID-19 Shelter In Place (SIP) order. Roll was collected via an email to the Secretary, and the Secretary filled the logbook; a total of 24 members and/or guests attended the on-air meeting.

Vice President's Words of Wisdom: Vice President Ben Adams **KK6SYJ** was not available for the meeting.

Secretary's Report:

- April minutes were moved for approval as corrected by David Boyd **KN6CEH** and seconded by Richard Kern **KN6RK**. There were no opposing votes raised.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Marcy Campbell **KE6IAU** was not available for the meeting.

VE Report:

- Dan Eaton **KB6DE** stated he has nothing to report for the past. In May, Dan **KB6DE** and Sherry Eaton **KK6MPY** will have a team conducting in-person testing on 05/15/2021 at 10:00 am at the Fortuna Fire Station. There will be a limit of 10 people testing, and Don Campbell **KE6HEC** has 3 students from his technician class signed up.

EmComm Report:

- Anthony **KG6LHW** advised he, Peter **W6IES** and Greg Waters **KJ6OUI** were accepted in to a 3-day FEMA class for AuxComm. Amateur radio operators have a lot of catching up to do to make up for past bad behavior by other operators. Winlink is the way of the future, more reliable than voice. They received certificates from the government for the course.
- Anthony **KG6LHW** advised the tsunami drill after action report is still in progress.
- Anthony **KG6LHW** stated the EC001 class started online on 04/21/2021, and it's not too late to join. Contact Anthony for more information.
- Peter Esko **W6IES** advised he will be taking a hiatus from EmComm in May and June due to an upcoming surgery. If anyone wants to step in to lead EmComm, that would be great. He hopes to be at Field Day for June depending on health.
- Matthew Renner **KN6CEI** advised there is a small group participating in the Winlink Wednesday net. Please let him know if you want to participate via email to KN6CEI@ARRL.NET. A reminder email goes out on Tuesday, and check-in occurs any time on Wednesday. Winlink over the air is preferred, but Telnet via the Internet can also be used. On Thursday, Matthew tallies the results. Seven operators participated last week.

- Jaye Inabnit **KE6SLS** advised he is alternating net control duties between the Western Country Cousins net on 75m and the NBEMS net. The capabilities of the FL suite will be explored during the NBEMS net, and he will be exploring investing in VHF/UHF type of apparatus. They are trying to be as inclusive as possible. It's good training for HF digital work. They are going over mentoring, net control, and net etiquette skills as well. NBEMS meets every other Monday at 20:00, and the next meeting is 05/10/2021.

Workshops:

- Anthony **KG6LHW** stated he hosted a show and tell workshop on Woodley Island for the communications trailer. He called out the latitude and longitude of the meeting site. He had the external mast with VHF antenna, 80m dipole, hamstick, and UHF/VHF antenna in/on trailer. He obtained everyone's email address for those in attendance and sent an email using a 40m band hamstick to a node in Portland and used an 80m dipole to send message via a node in San Rafael.
- Jaye **KE6SLS** sent action pictures via the HARC reflector and advised Matthew **KN6CEI** used a smartphone to send digital.
- Anthony **KG6LHW** advised Larry Buerer **KK6EEO** was checking out some items including the 20Ah battery, which has an overamp protection. Larry **KK6EEO** and Jeannie Buerer **KW1LTD** bought a 40Ah battery and swapped it out for the HARC trailer 20Ah battery. The Board approved it, and Anthony was using the new 40Ah battery during the meeting.
- Anthony **KG6LHW** stated the May 18 workshop will be building dipole antennas at an undisclosed location. He will send out a list of items to buy, and he wants to build 1 or 2 dipoles for the trailer during the workshop...one used for digital and one for voice. An email will be coming out soon, and the location of the workshop will be announced one hour ahead of time using latitude and longitude.

Tube Contests:

- Matthew Renner **KN6CEI** hosted the tube contests for the meeting and disqualified himself from the contests.
- Furthest DX QSO this month: Jaye **KE6SLS** nominated Randy Terra **KN6NSK** for contacts in OR and WA with 6w from a beach in Manila.
- Most QSOs this month: Jaye **KE6SLS** had about 250 contacts.

Trailer Report:

- Anthony **KG6LHW** advised he swapped out the gas in the generator and volunteered to do this every year at Spring Solstice.
- Anthony **KG6LHW** advised he is close to being done with new battery. He did not charge for labor, and the materials cost a few hundred dollars. Receipts will be sent to Marcy **KE6IAU**.

Website Report:

- David **KN6CEH** advised he is updating rosters frequently. Some net control stations are not using the most current version of the rosters. He encourages people to check the rosters frequently to make sure they have the most recent version.

- Steve Isherwood **KK6MPV** stated he won't be able to do net control coordination for several months for the HARC Net. Anthony **KG6LHW** stated the net control manager's role is to make sure the net control slot is filled for 2 months in advance and to make sure there is a back-up if primary net control is unavailable for some reason. Anthony **KG6LHW** advised the Vice President should handle net control coordination for now and will discuss with him. Jaye **KE6SLS** advised Carl Eggeson **KM6LIQ** will be taking HARC net control duties for the month of May. He encourages everyone to sign up and get used to running nets. Anthony **KG6LHW** advised he will take net control in June for field day prep.

Domain Name:

- Jaye **KE6SLS** is still working on getting the domain name changed over and hopes to have it done within a week or so.
- Jaye **KE6SLS** advised QRZ.com gave him credentials to access the QRZ page to get it updated, and he wants to transfer the credentials to David **KN6CEH**. Anthony **KG6LHW** asked for a motion on this request. Cliff **KN6CEJ** motioned, and Steve **KK6MPV** seconded. The motion passed with no objections. David **KN6CEH** asked if there are any ideas for the QRZ page to please let him know.
- David **KN6CEH** noticed on the Humboldt Amateur Radio Club Facebook page there are 90 members, most of whom are not members of HARC. This would be a good opportunity to do some outreach to invite them to join HARC. Most of HARC's activities are not listed on this page either, so we should cross post on this Facebook page. Kevin Bayless **KK6MPT** originally took on that job but is unable to work on it right now. We need a couple of people to handle Facebook as David **KN6CEH** and Anthony **KG6LHW** do not want to take on that role. Please email David **KN6CEH** or Anthony **KG6LHW** for now if you're interested. Mark Nelson **AA6DX** advised there are other HARC organizations out there, so some people may be signing up for the wrong club thinking they are joining ours.
- Jim Armstrong **KW6JIM** was the trustee for the club call sign prior to passing away. Howard Lang **KB6NN** and Jaye **KE6SLS** had the trustee updated to Anthony **KG6LHW**, and this is now posted in the communications trailer.

New Club Members:

- Anthony **KG6LHW** welcomed new members Mike Calkins **KJ6PEP**, Steven Blas **KE7ZPG**, and Rita Carole (no call sign yet).

Arcata Net Control Report:

- Cliff **KN6CEJ** advised he is net control for the Arcata Emergency Communications Net on Mondays at 19:00 for May only. He needs someone to serve as back-up for May, so please let him know if you're interested. Net control operators are also needed for June and beyond.

Rainbow Ridge:

- Jaye **KE6SLS** advised that he met with a net control for another diginet via phone who is donating a TNC to HARC. We need a second antenna and a 2m transceiver. This will be a standalone digipeater to cover Garberville to Eureka.
- Jaye **KE6SLS** is also looking into getting a Motorola repeater on Horse Mountain as well.

- Anthony **KG6LHW** asked if Jaye **KE6SLS** needs anything from the club at this time. He responded yes, he needs a 2m transceiver, and a dual band could be okay but a Yaesu single band is preferable. Anthony **KG6LHW** also asked about the antenna. Jaye **KE6SLS** advised it doesn't have to be anything special, can be very common. Anything like a Diamond X50 or equivalent hardened antenna that can handle massive winds would be needed. Anthony **KG6LHW** asked if anyone has any of this equipment to donate or sell or wants to donate funds to help procure the equipment to please contact Jaye **KE6SLS**.
- Anthony **KG6LHW** advised that this week only on Thursday, 05/06/21, Matthew **KN6CEI** will be running a net at 1900 local time to test the Rainbow Ridge repeater. This is a test to see who can get into it. Matthew **KN6CEI** will send an email with questions such as how much power you are running and where are you. If you can hear him but cannot respond to him, he will be standing by on the HARC repeater afterwards and sweep up anyone who couldn't check in. It's a bit of an experiment to see who can get into the repeater. Matthew **KN6CEI** lives in Blue Lake and has hit the repeater with a handheld. Anthony **KG6LHW** is envisioning holding the HARC monthly meeting in June on the Rainbow Ridge repeater as a proof of concept. Matthew **KN6CEI** will send out a reminder email prior to the net on the HARC reflector. The frequency is 146.910, tone 103.5, offset -600.

Muni Repeater:

- Anthony **KG6LHW** advised the electrical circuit for the HARC repeater is not on the auxiliary generator circuit of the building. When the power goes out, this repeater is off the air. He asked Don Nelson **WA6NBG** what would be appropriate to get a back-up battery and to advise if he needs a committee.
- Don **WA6NBG** advised he doesn't need a committee as to what to get so much as what we want to do. A 100Ah lithium-ion battery is \$800. A 100Ah gel battery is \$250. A 100Ah AGM battery is \$234. The AGM and gels are similar. He finds the AGM is a better fit and is cheaper. A 200Ah AGM battery is \$400. A 200Ah hybrid gel cell is \$450. An 88Ah interstate battery is \$134. There are tradeoffs between how the batteries are maintained and operated. One of the key things he found in his work with Humboldt County and Motorola design people is that the majority of the longevity of a battery is the charging circuit and being charged properly under the proper conditions. Batteries for back-up, home solar, etc., have a recommended life of 20 years under proper management. Spending money on the charging system and battery controller is far more important than the kind of battery we buy. Using the manufacturer's recommendations of an 80% discharge appears to be the most proper of those being used. If we have a 100Ah battery with a 5% duty cycle, for normal use like we use it now, we would it 5.1 days with a 100Ah battery; 10 days with a 200Ah battery. If there is an incident and we are using it with a 40% duty cycle, we would have 15 hours with a 100Ah battery and 31 hours with a 200Ah battery. The AGM battery has the least stringent charging requirements and better burst performance. If you buy more than one battery, they need to be of the same type and age. He does not know what the power supply is at the radio.
- Don **WA6NBG** advised that at one of our radio sites, the agency has a backup battery system that is there and is no longer being used. They need to confer to see if this will be abandoned equipment or will want it back. The site is abandoned, and the radio has been taken out, but there is a huge battery backup system and

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battery controller there. If it is abandoned, if we can get it from them, we might be able to get enough for the muni repeater and a back-up battery for Rainbow Ridge. He doesn't know the specifics of the battery but appears to be either a 140Ah to 840Ah battery. It is configured in a 24v set-up. They are incredibly heavy...if it is the 840Ah battery, it's around 637 pounds...if it's the 140Ah battery, it's around 157 pounds.

- Anthony **KG6LHW** advised he does not want to look into putting solar panels on the roof of the muni. We can haul the generator up to the roof in the event of a power outage.
- Jaye **KE6SLS** advised that before we spend any money on this, there is prime power available at the muni. He recommended we go back to the city about completing the circuit that they had initially offered us with a backup power plan. That repeater is not a primary repeater, it is a local repeater, so he would be reluctant to spend too much money on a backup source since it's a non-essential, non-emergency repeater. He thinks Don **WA6NBG** presented some good information. He thinks a lipo 4 battery is the only way to go and is easier to recycle.
- Anthony **KE6LHW** stated the city never promised us access to be on that generator loop. He thinks the muni repeater does need a backup as we do use it for various emergency drills. He will work with Don **WA6NBG** to see what would be needed.

Field Day:

- Anthony **KG6LHW** asked if anyone wants to take on the role of coordinating Field Day in June. He wants someone to do it all if possible. He will handle it if necessary but wants others to get familiar with it in case he's not available. He advised we were taking out the tower antenna 3 times per year pre-COVID...field day, winter field day, and the QSO party. He's hoping to increase it to 4 times per year. The coax in the tower trailer doesn't exist. Don **WA6NBG** bought a 150 ft stick of coax that we can use, but it was more than we needed. Anthony **KG6LHW** brought a 100 ft stick, but it wasn't enough. He is proposing that the club buy two 125 ft sticks of good coax that lives in the tower trailer so it's ready. Jaye **KE6SLS** recommended we get RG8 coax. 100 ft is a common size and has a discount because it's already cut, and a 50 ft stick. He recommended putting a date on it and replace it after 10 years. Anthony **KG6LHW** did not want to go with 100 ft because it's too short. Bob Colburn **KA6ULG** also recommended marking it clearly that it's the trailer coax. Anthony **KG6LHW** put forth a motion to purchase two 125 ft sticks of RG8 coax at ~\$170 ea. Jaye **KE6SLS** motioned to do so with the caveat that we date it. Bob **KA6ULG** seconded the motion, and there were no objections. Anthony will handle purchasing the coax.

Future Events:

- May 16 is Portable HF Day. Anthony **KG6LHW** is setting that up. Many members will have their stations available for everyone to check out. There may be a Winlink experiment. He will be sending the latitude and longitude of where the event is being held. The announcement will be made at 10:00 am on the HARC repeater on 05/16/21. The event will be 2-3 hours. David **KN6CEH** asked if the event will be on dirt, grass, or pavement. Anthony **KG6LHW** stated it will be on grass.

- **Redwood Empire Endurance Riders (REER)**: This is an equestrian group in the greater Humboldt area that has three events coming up that would be good opportunities for participation by club members. The first one is May 29 & 30 - Chalk Rock Ranch Ride near Bridgeville. The owner advised we can camp there starting on 05/28, and one meal will be provided on 29th & 30th. There are a minimum of 3 operators needed, but Anthony would like to have 6 operators to have newer operators paired up with more experienced operators. Don **WA6NBG** and David **KN6CEH** both advised they will be going.

Miscellaneous Items:

- Jaye **KE6SLS** has been working on a New Ham Radio Packet that will be handed out to new Hams once they've passed their test and will also be available on the HARC website. It should be completed within the next couple of weeks. The goal is to get new Hams on the air once they pass their test.
- Jaye **KE6SLS** and David **KN6CEH** have been working on the HARC site. Still some old, no longer essential information on the website that they are working on clearing up. The rosters and preambles are almost completely updated and will be uniform. There will be an email address to send updates to.
- Jaye **KE6SLS** advised that ARRL is hosting a series of very informative webinars under learning resources.
- Jaye **KE6SLS** stated the HARC email reflector was getting a lot of replies to reflector emails that should have been going only to the poster of the email, not the whole group. From now on if you hit the reply button on reflector emails now, you will be responding to the poster not the entire group. If there are additional email address in the recipient section of emails other than the HARC reflector email address, the email will be rejected and the poster will be notified to send only to the HARC email address.
- Jaye **KE6SLS** requested an update from Don **WA6NBG** about the FWRA meeting. Don **WA6NBG** advised:
 - Tower was damaged last winter, and they are looking into what can be done.
 - Reroofing the roof was discussed because it is very rusty.
 - Battery backup and solar panels were discussed.
 - Redoing the electrical was discussed as apparently there is a bad connection between the building and the PG&E meter.
 - There will be a picnic meeting on Wednesday 05/05/21 to check all of this out and make recommendations.
- The Kinetic Sculpture Race has been canceled, so Anthony **KG6LHW** advised this might be the only year we get to do the Chalk Rock race since it's normally the same weekend as Kinetic.
- Mark Nelson **AA6DX** advised the FWRA ham radio picnic/potluck & swap meeting will be on 09/12/21 at the Rio Dell Fireman Park.

The meeting was adjourned at 20:47 PDT.