

Minutes of the Bluefield, WV's East River Amateur Radio Club meeting held on February 5, 2024  
<http://www.erarc.com> Local emergency HF freq: 3.860+-5. We meet on the first Monday of each month at 7pm at 704 Bland Street, Room 523, Bluefield, WV 24701. Mailing address: P.O. Box 1362, Bluefield, WV 24701

President Matt Morris KC8LGS Vice President: David Sexton AB8D, Treasurer; Jay Belt K8CTI, Secretary: George "Hooger" Fisher III W4OF, Webmaster: David Lester N8VFR, HamClubOnline liaison and VE team leader Berlon Roberts W8ZBR,

The meeting was opened at 0700pm by Matt Morris KC8LGS, President. The Group stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance. (Henry Shinn KC3KGY donated the new flag, pole and stand. Many thanks to Henry for his donation. )

Matt welcomed the other 14 in attendance. He especially noted that Theda Boyd (testing on Saturday), Joe Roske KD8CAP and Robert Cook KA8MDZ were in the room. There were 2 participants via the ZOOM presentation tonight: Charles Hampton K8CEH and Mark Meadows KC8RGY.

Matt apologized for his recent inactivity and absence as his mother is not doing well physically and his twin sisters have their own problems with dementia. He and his wife are staying with them in Giles County as much as they can. He's trying his best to keep them out of a nursing facility.

Hooger read the minutes of the January 6, 2024 meeting and they were accepted.

Membership: Berlon Roberts and HamClubOnline: We have 52 members of which 10 are family members. Membership is down by 15 compared to December 30; those 15 were dropped from the roster December 31 due to non-renewals. There were several renewals received tonight. Matt talked briefly about membership and asked if the Club has ever had an auxiliary like the Rescue Squads used to have. John Riddle N8RIG said 'no, they are just listed as family with or without a Ham license.'

Treasurer's report: Deposits included \$8.00 from a 50/50 drawing, \$65.00 from membership renewals and two expenditures were \$50.00 to HamClubOnline and \$25.00 to the State of WV for our business license. PayPal no deposits or expenditures noted. The PayPal link is on our [www.HamclubOnline.com](http://www.HamclubOnline.com) link.

Repeaters: Jay Belt said that they're all working but 145.49 is still having noise problems. John Riddle described it as "clipping" and Gary Kadar N8GK said it was "picket fencing." Jay said that we've had this problem for 15 years or better and everything from the power supply to antennas have been changed out with the same result. Robert Cook said that the Civil Air Patrol uses some sort of band filter that's made out of short pieces of feedline. Jay said that we've used band pass filters and ferrite core filters to try to remedy the problem.

Skywarn: Net is every Monday (except the first Monday of the month) at 7pm on 145.49. Matt mentioned that there's been a good number of checkins. There was question of linking 145.49 to 147.06 or even the ARA repeaters for more checkins. Jay Belt made comments of looking into possibilities.

Emergency Coordinator/ARES: Net is the third Thursday of each month at 7pm on the 145.49 repeater. Check-in numbers similar to Skywarn. Matt handed out ARES membership forms, asking for volunteers to sign up and help him with the local ARES organization.

Volunteer Examiner: Berlon Roberts W8ZBR ERARC VEC. The VE team tests on the second Saturday on a quarterly basis in February, May, August and November. **The next session will be on February 10, 2024** at 9am at 704 Bland St. Bluefield, WV, room 523. The VE team must have a copy of your current license if applicable, a photo ID is a must as well as a copy of a CSCE, if applicable. (Those testing must have a FCC Registration Number and valid email address before testing. The cost is \$15 and we will accept cash and check but NO PLASTIC. The new FCC \$35 federal licensing fee must be paid to the FCC, NOT THE ERARC. <https://www.fcc.gov/wireless/support/universal-licensing-system-uls-resources/getting-fcc-registration-number-frn>

(DMR net by David Sexton AB8D: (Net is every Tuesday at 0730pm on the W8MOP 444.45 DMR repeater on the 3154 WV statewide talk group.)

New business: It was mentioned that we seriously look into using Winlink digital communications as this system allows lots of data to be transmitted from point A to point B via connection to email via the internet. <https://www.winlink.org/> "Winlink Global Radio Email..**is a network of amateur radio and authorized government stations that provide worldwide radio email using radio pathways where the internet is not present.**" Hooger said that several years ago, Greg Dominguez AF8GD suggested that the Club to purchase the equipment needed to use Winlink with our HF / UHF / VHF radios. They were purchased. There was a lot of discussion over this and other digital modes of communications. Berlon said that the software is \$25/year.

Old business: Getting 2M / 440 radios into our Radio Room for use/demonstration. Discussion. David Lester looked up the TYT TH-9800D Quad band mobile radio that's going for \$225 on Amazon as an example of what is available.

<https://www.amazon.com/TYT-TH-9800-Cross-Band-Mobile-Radio/dp/B00I53VUEY> Gary Kadar said that we don't use packet any more and it's a 2M radio that we can bring here from the 911Center.

**Matt asked if members of the Club could give a demonstration on FT-8 and/or other digital modes at the next meeting. Consensus was 'yes'.**

Robert Cook is here tonight to see if the Club will agree to accept 7 AC to DC power supplies from the CAP in Charleston, WV. He has 2-each Astron 12, 35, FS30 and one Tripp Lite unit. They do not work but may be used for parts or be repaired. Discussion. Jay Belt will receive them for the Club. Robert only needs an itemized statement from the Club stating that we did receive these units. Robert and Jay will get together and get this task done.

Charleston, WV Hamfest March 9, 2024 at the Shriner's temple. <http://www.qsl.net/w8gk>

Gary Kadar said that on Facebook Market Place, there's a light pole trailer with lights with generator for sale in Blacksburg, Va. For \$800. The generator doesn't run but he thought that some Ham may be interested.

Jay Belt won the 50/50 drawing and gave his winnings back to the Club.

The meeting was over at 0755pm

"To Do list": 1) Echolink 2) additional 2M, 440, 6M, etc. radios into our Radio Room 3). Special Event Station at Princeton Railway Depot in the spring 4) firmware for 145.49 5) APRS