

3/11/2025

The Martin County Amateur Radio Club met at 7:00 pm at the Martin County EMA building. There were 11 people in attendance. Club vice-president Reuben Montgomery called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Minutes from the February meeting were presented for approval. Andy made a motion to approve the minutes. Paul made a 2nd to the motion and all voted in favor.

The treasurer's report is as follows: There are currently 21 paid club members. There is \$420 to be deposited as soon as the bank account is opened. Cory reported he has filed the paperwork for the tax exempt ID number for the club and is waiting for the number to be issued. Once that information is provided to the bank the account can be completed. Julia will make a deposit at that time. Paul made the motion to approve the treasurer's report. Jay made a 2nd to the motion. All voted in favor of accepting the treasurer's report. Reuben reported there is one new member who was approved but still needs to pay dues.

The group reviewed portions of the Ham Shack TV YouTube video Ham Radio Emergency or Hoax. Points reviewed included how to handle emergency traffic. To try to get the name of the person and a location of the emergency as soon as possible in order to dispatch emergency personnel. Continue to announce on the frequency that this is an emergency and to hold all other traffic. Net control should designate tasks to others assisting to limit input from those trying to be helpful. Others who are trying to obtain information for the emergency can talk to each other on another frequency or by other means of communication so that the frequency the emergency is on can be kept open for information directly related to the emergency.

Reuben discussed the HAM testing companies and discussed pros and cons of each. One option is Laurel VEC. Laurel is a club that processes applications and testing. The club must incur the expenses related to testing but copying tests and answer sheets and advertising is usually the only costs. There is no fees to take the test. The testing site must provide at least 3 people to administer a test and the club must have at least 3 exams per year that must be scheduled by November 1st for the following year. The club can add additional dates to the calendar or reschedule dates if needed. Other clubs usually have those wanting to test fill out an application so they have the information needed to complete their paperwork ahead of the testing time. Other clubs require those wishing to test to schedule an appointment to ensure there are enough club members present to administer the test. Club members administering the Laurel test must have a license category above the level they are testing. Our club currently has at least 5 extra class license holders. The other testing option is ARRL. Those testing don't have to be an ARRL member in order to test but the club must collect a \$15 fee to administer each test. ARRL tests can only be given by trained ARRL accredited volunteer examiners. A couple of members of the club are accredited to administer the tests. Paul stated he felt we should try to eliminate barriers to testing and the fee might discourage some. Reuben asked the group which company

we should proceed with. Paul made the motion to go with Laurel VEC. Andy made a 2nd to the motion and all voted in favor.

Reuben introduced Stephen N9PE to the group. Stephen is the Laurel testing team lead for the Patoka Valley ARC. He discussed how Patoka Valley ARC does their testing and offered to mentor our club with testing until we got comfortable. Barry made a motion to have Stephen mentor or testing team. Garry made a 2nd to the motion and all voted in favor. Tony made a motion to nominate Barry to be the MCARC testing team lead. Garry made a 2nd to the motion and all voted in favor. Garry suggested we alternate testing dates with other surrounding counties so if someone is ready to test they could easily find an option close to home.

Reuben discussed ARRL Club membership and if our club should become an ARRL member. In order to qualify there must be 51% of our active members that have ARRL individual memberships and must be licensed radio operators. There are 5 ARRL members present at tonight's meeting. The cost of dues to become an ARRL member was discussed. Several thought it was very expensive for the individual. Since we don't have 51% participation in order to qualify as a group, Barry made the motion to table this. Andy made a 2nd to the motion and all voted in favor.

Reuben discussed the differences between ARES (Amateur Radio Emergency Service) and RACES (Rural Amateur Civil Emergency Service). ARES starts before an emergency and continues through the end of the emergency response. RACES starts during an emergency and is tied to Federal Emergency Management. The group discussed advantages and disadvantages of participating in either group. Garry mentioned that Skywarn groups can be just as effective. Most felt our club can be effective without participating in either one, however members wanted to table this discussing for the next meeting so our president, Cory, could share his plan for our club with regards to helping in emergency situations.

Reuben would like to have a back-up net control for the Skywarn net in the event of an emergency during the workday when Reuben is unavailable. The net control would communicate any necessary information to the National Weather Service. Paul volunteered to be a back-up. Andy made a motion for Paul to be the designated back-up for the Skywarn net control. Jay made a 2nd to the motion and all voted in favor.

The group discussed holding training sessions along with our meetings and when we wanted to have the training. Jay made a motion to host trainings following our regular monthly meeting unless there was a delay in the start time to the meeting. Barry made a 2nd to the motion and all voted in favor. If there is a delay in the start of the meeting, training can be done first to fill the delay.

Andy has no status update on the application he submitted for a linking frequency.

Garry reported the t-shirt orders aren't complete at this time.

Garry stated he would like to proceed with plans for Field Day, June 28th & 29th. No specific plans were made at this meeting but it was suggested that field day might be held at the Martin State Forrest or West Boggs Park. Garry will check to see which park would have a shelter house available those dates.

Garry suggested that any members of the group that wanted to participate could meet for breakfast occasionally. Jade made a motion to proceed with the breakfast plans at Stoll's Lakeview and Andy made a 2nd to the motion. Garry will work on a date and share information with the group at the weekly net.

The next meeting of the Martin County Amateur Radio Club will be April 8th at 7:00 pm at the EMA Building. The Net will be held weekly on Thursday at 9pm on the Shoals repeater and 9:30 pm for the Loogootee repeater.

With no other business to discuss, Andy made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Julia made a second to the motion and all voted in favor.