

SMARC MEETING NOTES 2023 August 28

The Smoky Mountain Amateur Radio Club (SMARC, hereafter referred to as “Club”) 2023 August meeting was held as a combination of an in-person meeting at the United Steel Workers Union Hall in Alcoa, TN, and a Zoom Video Conference. An announcement for the meeting was made during the KK4XA Morning Net on the W4OLB SMARC repeater.

- The SMARC August meeting was called to order at 1903 ET by Vice President Mike Foley [K4MJF] (President Bob Wilson [KK4XA] was not in attendance. [All references to "Mike" are to Mike Foley [K4MJF] - *ed.*])
- Twenty two members and 1 visitor were in attendance at the union hall with 15 others joining via Zoom Video Conference.
- Mike asked for the Ham Roll Call at which time each member announced name and call sign; Bob [K9JU], Secretary of the Club, read the names and calls of those on Zoom.
- Net Manager, Mike [K4MJF], said the average check-ins for the Club Thursday Evening Net over the last 12-weeks is 29.5, with a high of 38 and a low of 25. He extended his thanks to Melvin [WB5KSM], for handling early check-ins and to all of the Net Control Stations (NCS) for their participation. [If you are interested in becoming an NCS, please contact Mike, K4MJF – *ed.*]
- Mike announced the continued growth of the Club with 120(+) members. Mike said there is a Technician Class License class, probably on Zoom, planned for this fall to be taught by Bob [KK4XA] and other volunteer instructors.
- Mike gave the Health and Welfare report for Charles [K4BAL], who was not in attendance, telling the membership of problems facing members or immediate family thereof: Randy [K4RDJ]; Charles [K4BAL]; Mary Kay, the wife of Jim [W7FKI]; Michelle, the wife of Scott [N0EDV]; Joe [KN4YED]; and Melvin [WB5KSM]. We wish all of you the best from the Club.
- Jordan [K4AVG] made a motion to accept the July Club meeting minutes [available at the Club website, <http://w4olb.org/> – *ed.*]; the motion was seconded by Paul [KQ4DPH]. The minutes of the July meeting are therefore approved.
- Ric [W8KO] wishes to start a CW [i.e., Morse Code – *ed.*] class that would probably be held on Wednesday evenings via Zoom Video Conference. Ric will send emails to Club members with the announcement and the tentative schedule.
- The Club Public Information Office (PIO), Josh [AA4WX] had several pieces of information for the Club:
 - N4T will be a Special Event Station (“SES”) by the Skywarn Group for the TN QSO Party on September 03. The station(s) will be setup at the former Club Field Day site, the Middlesettlements United Methodist Church “Field of Dreams” at 2508 Middlesettlements Rd., Louisville, TN.
 - The Club 2024 Field Day coordinators will be Josh [AA4WX] and Jordan [K4AVG]. The proposed sites for the operations are: 1) Smoky View Baptist Church; 2) Field of Dreams [see

above for details – *ed*]; 3) Look Rock Picnic Area of the Great Smoky Mountain State Park. Discussions and a questionnaire to follow.

- Another SES is possible at Cade’s Cove to showcase Amateur Radio. Ken [KQ4DIJ] will contact the Park Services as he is a volunteer for the Service.
- Mike said a nominating committee for the upcoming election of Club officers will comprise of Kelley [KR4FK], Carroll [W4PCA] and David [N4AER]. The Chicago Redneck Yankee, Bob [K9JU], present Club Secretary, announced he would continue as Secretary [for better or worse? - *ed*].
- Dave [N9KMY] explained the financial summary sheet as the Treasurer’s Report. The total of all accounts as of 2023 August 24 is \$14,844.03. The only expense since the previous report was for gaffer’s tape at \$10.96. Details of the summary sheet may be found at the SMARC website [see <https://w4olb.org/>, in the Members Section under Member Documents - *ed*]. Mike asked for a motion to accept the Treasurer’s Report which was made by Josh [AA4WX] and seconded by Kelley [KR4FK]. Acceptance of the 2023 August Treasurer’s Report therefore passed.
- Dave [N9KMY] said the Repeater Upgrade Committee met; the committee is composed of Dave [N9KMY], Bob [KK4XA], Kelley [KR4FK] and Mike. The findings of the committee are:
 - The present components, sans the power supply, are no longer available. This includes the repeater (Kenwood), 100-Watt power amplifier (TPL?) and the controller (?).
 - A new VHF antenna is needed. The hardline transmission line may need replacement and should be considered in the budget for replacement items. Kurt [KC4NX] plans to repair the old antenna, if possible, and keep it in reserve (out of the weather).
 - The ac generator owned by City of Alcoa Water is no longer in service [cost of propane has become prohibitive – *ed*]. Therefore, the Club will need to “beef up” the battery backup system for extended operations during power outages.
 - Thoughts for improved linking of both of the Club repeaters are in the planning stage.
- **NOTE:** The total improvement and/or replacement of the repeater system appears to be in two phases. A copy of the Power Point presentation is posted on the Club website in the member documents.
 - Phase 1 Estimated cost at \$3,000.00 - The VHF antenna system needs replacement and repair as soon as possible [before the snow flies – *ed*]. The new antenna system will be referred to as the “NAS.”
 - Phase 2 Estimated cost at \$6,500.00 - Replacement of the electronic components of the repeater system.
- Dave [N9KMY] reported the monies for a new antenna (Sinclair ST224), feedline and installation costs are already in the budget as a line item, Repeater Fund, at about \$3,000.00. After some discussion, the thought was additional monies may be required. The motion for the NAS was made by Craig [NW1A] and seconded by Bill [KY4KB]. Further discussion followed. Dave stated \$1,000.00 was in the repeater repair line item if the total cost of the NAS

is greater than \$3,000.00.

- David [N1ESK] proposed a friendly amendment to the motion to limit the total expenditure for the NAS to \$4,000.00 which would come from a combination of the Club Repeater Fund and a Repeater Repair Fund from donations. [It was also noted that the Club is a 501(c)(3) and may help you RMD QCD folks - *ed*]. The motion for the friendly amended sum of \$4,000.00 was passed by a majority of those in attendance and on Zoom.
- Jordan [K4AVG] proposed increasing the battery capacity versus replacing the repeater as a higher priority. There was also a short discussion of the possibly using the ORNL Certificates of Deposit. [Deaf ears? - *ed*.]
- Joel [N4JHS] asked if the State of Tennessee would have any grants for Amateur Radio system improvements. David [N1ESK] answered he did not know. The East Tennessee Repeater Association (ETRA) can apply for grants adding the phrase, “there’s always money in the banana stand.”
- Bob [KK4XA] asked if we could use the Certificates of Deposit with ORNL as collateral for a loan. N9KMY answered with a resounding “NO.” It was further stated that 501(c)(3) organizations generally do not have a method of borrowing money.
- David [N1ESK], proposed a fund raising committee to pursue acquiring funds for Phase 2 of the repeater upgrade project. Josh [AA4WX] made a motion to proceed with the idea; Craig [NW1A] seconded the motion. After a short discussion, the motion to pursue fund raising for Phase 2 of the repeater upgrade project was passed by a majority of those in attendance and on Zoom. Per the By-Laws of the Club, the President is required to establish this committee.

The 2023 August 28 meeting of SMARC ended at 2044 ET. Thank you to all in attendance.

Respectfully submitted by SMARC Secretary,

Bob Loving [K9JU]

P.S.: Don’t forget the KK4XA Morning Net, Monday through Thursday at 9:00 AM (0900) ET on the W4OLB/R repeater.