

***Program***

Josh Cash, KE8EAS, led an open forum: "What Do Our New Hams Want to See?"

***Attendance***

John Biddle, W8PG  
Gary Carter, KD8MSR  
Josh Cash, KE8EAS  
Bob Curtis, KD8FRQ  
Eric McFadden, WD8RIF  
Rob Rose, KE8JDA  
Robin Rose, KE8JDB  
Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ  
John Thomas, KC8JWZ

***Corrections/additions of Minutes***

The minutes of the March 20, 2018 meeting were distributed. One error was noted: Rob (KE8JDA) and Robin (KD8JDB) Rose actually reside in Nelsonville, not in Amanda as Jeff Slattery's email that had been read into the minutes stated. The Secretary will amend the minutes and publish to the website. Josh Cash, KE8EAS, moved to accept the minutes as amended. Rob Rose, KE8JDA, seconded the motion. The motion passed.

***Treasurer's Report***

In the absence of the Treasurer, the Treasurer's Report was presented by the Chair.

As of April 17, the Treasury has a balance of \$2,044.50 in unencumbered funds

Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. Josh Cash, KE8EAS, seconded the motion. The motion passed.

**Old Business**

## VHF Repeater (145.15 MHz)

VHF Repeater Trustee Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that during the April ACARA 2m net, there were indications of repeater insensitivity or de-sense. However, the aging Yaesu FM repeater worked well during a bicycle-mobile test over the entire Marathon course Eric performed with the help of Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, on April 10. The repeater also performed properly during the Athens Marathon itself on April 15.

Upon the return of warm weather, Eric will work with climber George Fitz and 9-1-1 Coordinator Brian Davis to move the repeater to the 9-1-1 tower.

## UHF Repeater (442.100 MHz)

UHF Repeater Trustee Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, reported he used a UHF antenna analyzer to identify the proper feedline for the repeater antenna and he measured the antenna's SWR to be 1.7:1.

Jeff has temporarily deployed a Yaesu DR-1X System Fusion repeater without an external controller, with the transmitter output power set at the 25-watt level, on the club's coordinated frequency of 442.100 MHz. Users are reminded that in this configuration, the repeater will not send a courtesy tone of reset beep.

## VHF DMR Repeater (146.625 MHz)

Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, reported he has contacted Clyde Baker, N8CCM, about the commercial-grade 100-watt VHF business band (154MHz) repeater Clyde had offered the club at no cost but Jeff has determined that this unit is actually a transmit-only paging system and isn't suitable for use as a DMR repeater.

Jeff reported that Clyde and his former partner Bob Matthews might have a true commercial repeater to offer to the club. Jeff will continue to work with Clyde and Bob about this.

### APRS Digipeater

Packet-Node Trustee Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, reported that on March 23 he moved the APRS digipeater into the 9-1-1 building. This move also involved mounting the low-profile antenna on the side of the 9-1-1 building.

Jeff has not been successful in building an Arduino-based APRS iGate. He has purchased a Raspberry Pi-based TNC-X (<http://tnc-x.com>) with which he hopes to use to build and deploy a functioning iGate at the repeater site within a week or two.

The APRS digipeater is usually on the national APRS frequency of 144.39 MHz but for the Athens Marathon and other selected events it is switched to 144.34 MHz.

### Red Cross Antenna Session

Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, reported he hasn't yet installed the feedline entrance-head but hopes to do so once the warm weather returns.

### Iron Furnace Trail Run – Saturday, April 7, 2018

<https://www.ironfurnacetrailrun.com/>

The Chair read into the minutes the following email from Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ:

Thanks to the operators who helped make the 2018 Iron Furnace Trail Run a successful and safe event this past Saturday. Thanks to Kirk Groeneveld, KC8JRV, Bob Curtis, KD8FRQ, Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, Miles McFadden, KD8KNC and Josh Cash, KE8EAS for covering our checkpoints and aid stations. The organizers are very appreciative of our communications support.

### Athens Marathon – Sunday, April 15, 2018

<http://www.athensohiomarathon.com/>

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that the 145.15 MHz repeater worked well during the marathon.

Eric noted that participation in the Full- and Half-Marathons was up this year. There were 332 registrants for full marathon and 912 registrants for the half marathon, for a total of 1,237 registrations. Packets were picked up by about 86% of registrants, or about 1,063. At the time of the meeting, numbers for actual starters had not yet been calculated.

Eric reported that the ACARA, with the help of two non-ham bicyclists, used APRS trackers to track the location of four runners this year, up from the usual three. The Full-Marathon male lead was tracked by Eric McFadden, WD8RIF. The Full-Marathon female lead and the Half-Marathon lead were each tracked by non-ham bicyclists carrying APRS trackers. The last runner was tracked by Bob Curtis, KD8FRQ. Eric noted that tracking the Half-Marathon lead, which was a new service this year, would have been easier logistically had the club had a dedicated APRS tracker for this purpose.

The ACARA provided twenty operators to support the Marathon, including Ted Jacobson, W8KVK, and Rob Jacobson, KB9AFT, who provided invaluable back-end APRS support.

ACARA President Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reminded the members that the Athens Marathon is the biggest public-service event that the club supports annually. Eric thanks everyone who helped the ACARA support this year's event.

### ACARA Website & Email Changes

Tyler Hooker, AK5HT, reported via email that he hopes to deploy the new WordPress theme to the website soon, perhaps as early as next week.

**New Business**

Athens Hamfest – Sunday, April 29, 2018

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that he has confirmed availability of the public address system owned by Ron Chapman, Jr., N8HEK.

Eric reported that on April 4, the ACARA received notification of the award of a \$250 Tourism Grant from the Athens County Convention and Visitors Bureau. Eric has completed and submitted the necessary form to claim this money.

Eric reported that Jim Crouse, KC8OVB, and Ted Jacobson, W8KVK, are building the email address list and postcard address list. They will send the email address list to Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, who will send the hamfest announcement emails. Ted will print address labels for the postcards.

Eric asked for a volunteer to pick up and return the thirty highway cones from the City of Athens. Rob Rose, KE8JDA, volunteered he can do this.

Eric needs to verify with Carl Denbow, N8VZ, that he has the ticket drum and can transport it to the hamfest.

Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, reported that the VE session is all in order.

Eric reported that the club will be selling the HF station from the estate of John "Andy" Andracki, KB8ER (SK), a Radio Shack tabletop shortwave receiver, and some books at the hamfest.

Carl Denbow, N8VZ, reported via email that he has received payment for three tables, has reserved several tables for Debco but has not yet received payment, and has reserved a pair of tables for a seller who will pay on the day of the event. After receiving this report from Carl, Eric took a reservation for three more tables which will be paid for on the day of the event.

After asking for suggestions, Eric announced the Community Center walk-through will be at 3pm on Thursday, April 26. Eric will confirm with Andrew Chiki of the Community Center that he can meet us at that time.

Josh Cash, KE8EAS, reminded the membership that last month the club voted to consider buying a second Facebook

advertisement the week prior to the hamfest. After discussion, Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, made a motion to approve the spending of \$20 for the purchase of a Facebook advertisement to run the week ending April 29. Bob Curtis, KD8FRQ, seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Josh will place the advertisement.

#### Lake Hope Bicycle Race – Sunday, May 6

[http://www.ac-ara.org/?page\\_id=29](http://www.ac-ara.org/?page_id=29)

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that the ACARA communications-support for the Lake Hope Bicycle Race will be from 9am to approximately 5pm on Sunday, May 6. Operations will be on the Vinton County 147.105 MHz repeater, which requires an 88.5 Hz tone. The simplex frequency of 146.400 MHz will be used as back-up.

Those wishing to help with this event should contact Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, at [n8suz@yahoo.com/](mailto:n8suz@yahoo.com).

#### Thunderbunny 50K – Saturday, May 12

<http://www.thunderbunny50k.com/>

Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, reported that the the Iron Furnace Trail Run organizers are putting on the Thunderbunny 50K on Saturday, May 12 at Stroud's Run State Park from 8am to around 5pm. The organizers are looking for at least two operators to help with communications. These operators would be located at the race start/finish and at the main turn-around point. Repeater coverage at these locations is as-yet unknown but the two points are close enough together that simplex might serve, if needed.

Those wishing to help with this event should contact Jeff at [n8suz@yahoo.com/](mailto:n8suz@yahoo.com/).

ARRL Field Day – Saturday-Sunday, June 23-24, 2018

<http://www.arrl.org/field-day>

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that he emailed Dovetail Solar about the use of their solar-demonstration trailer but he has not yet received a reply

Eric reported that Fair Board Secretary Paula Carpenter, who is the ACARA's contact on the Fair Board, was successful in pleading the ACARA's case and the Fairgrounds has been reserved at no charge for Field Day weekend. Eric signed the fee-free lease-agreement 2018-04-05. The weekend of June 23-24 is the rain-date for the Richland Fire Department's demolition derby; if the demolition derby is rescheduled to this date, we'll need to coordinate with the fire department for access to the Fairgrounds.

Eric suggested that unless the OU students can commit to participate, we should plan to participate in Class 1A. If the OU students can commit to participate, we can think about moving to Class 2A but we probably wouldn't have enough operators to take advantage of the available free Get On the Air (GOTA) Station. If we run in 2A, we'll need additional antennas and supports, we'll need bandpass filters, we'll need two competition-grade HF transceivers, and we might need a computer network for the three logging computers. Eric will contact the OU Amateur Radio Club.

Josh Cash, KE8EAS, volunteered to generate a press release for the Media Publicity Bonus.

Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, volunteered to invite an elected governmental official for the Site Visitation by an Elected Governmental Official Bonus.

Robin Rose, KE8JDB, said she has friends with children under 19 year of age who she will encourage to visit the Field Day site for the Youth Participation Bonus.

Eric needs to confirm the following:

Will John McCutcheon, N8XWO, serve as VHF Station Captain and provide the station?

Can Kevin Croissant, KE8HRK, bring the expertise and equipment to make satellite contacts for the Satellite QSO Bonus?

Can Jim Crouse, KC8OVB, invite someone from the Red Cross to visit as a representative of an agency for the Site Visitation by a Representative of an Agency Bonus?

Can Andy Young, KD8WVX, post to social media before and during Field Day for the Social Media Bonus?

Can Andy Young, KD8WVX, serve as Safety Officer for the Safety Officer Bonus?

Eric mentioned we need someone to develop an educational activity for the Educational Activity Bonus.

Eric mentioned we need one, and possibly two, competition-grade HF transceivers. Tony Milluzzi, KD8RTT, had at one point offered the use of his Elecraft KX3 and matching KXPA100 amplifier; Eric will contact Tony about this.

Athens Marathon 2019 – Sunday, April 14, 2019

<http://www.athensohiomarathon.com/>

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that the date for the 2019 running of the Athens Marathon has been announced. The 2019 running of the Athens Marathon will be on Sunday, April 14, 2019.

Eric suggested the club should plan to have a fourth APRS tracker for Marathon 2019. He and Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, both have plans to build trackers this year.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:16pm following a motion by Rob Rose, KE8JDA; a second by Josh Cash, KE8EAS; and a vote.

Respectfully submitted, Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, President and Secretary.