

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was held via Zoom teleconference.

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 pm by President Eric McFadden, WD8RIF.

Attendance

Michael Baxla, KE8ICP
John Biddle, W8PG
Bob Curtis, KD8FRQ
Carl Denbow, N8VZ
Drew McDaniel, W8MHV
Eric McFadden, WD8RIF
Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ
Joe Weber, KE8LRZ

Corrections/Additions to Minutes

Due to this being a teleconference-only meeting, no hard-copies of the February Minutes were distributed. Members had been instructed via email to read the February Minutes on-line prior to the meeting.

A motion to accept the February Minutes as published was made by Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ. The motion was seconded by Bob Curtis, KD8FRQ. The motion passed without dissent.

Treasurer's Report

Due to this being a teleconference-only meeting, no hard-copies of the Treasurer's Report were distributed. The Treasurer's Report in PDF format is available online:

http://www.ac-ara.org/minutes/2021/Treasurers_Report_March_2021.pdf.

Treasurer Drew McDaniel, W8MHV, presented the Treasurer's Report. The club treasury holds \$1,432.98 in unencumbered funds. The *Jim Crouse Memorial Fund* holds \$158.39.

Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, made a motion that the Treasurer's Report be accepted as presented. The motion was seconded by Bob Curtis, KD8FRQ. The motion passed without dissent.

Old Business**VHF and UHF Repeaters**

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that Bill Warthman, K8WJW, used a spectrum analyzer during recent ACARA 2m nets to look for the signal that might be causing the repeater desense-issue and he identified the ACARA's digipeater on 144.39 MHz as a possible culprit. Bill also noticed that the repeater signal-strength at his location dropped about 10dB over the period of one of the nets; Eric speculated that this could be a heat-related issue.

Jeff Slattery reported that the UHF repeater continues to work well.

Jeff Slattery reported that he has not been able to spend much time with the Arcom ARC-210 repeater controller project recently, but he hopes to be able to get back to the project soon.

Old Business (continued)

ACARA Nets

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that the ACARA's weekly and monthly nets continue to do well during this time of COVID-19. He reminded members of the current net schedule:

- 2m FM Net, Mondays, 7pm, 145.15 MHz
- 70cm FM Net, Mondays, immediately following the 2m net, 442.100 MHz
- 10m SSB Ragchew Net, Tuesdays, 5pm, 28.350 MHz
- 6m AM Net, Sundays and Wednesdays, 5pm, 50.4 MHz
- 2m System Fusion Net, Thursdays, 5pm, 145.15 MHz
- 70cm System Fusion Net, Thursdays, immediately following the 2m System Fusion net, 442.100 MHz
- 2m FM Simplex Net, first Thursday, 7pm, 146.400 MHz

Eric extended thanks to all those serving as net-control and to all those participating in the club nets.

ACARA Constitution and Bylaws

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that the rewrite of the club's Constitution and Bylaws remains on hold during the COVID-19 epidemic.

Old Business (continued)

ACARA / SCARF VE Testing Session – March 15, 2021

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, read the email sent earlier by Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ:

The ACARA/SCARF VE session last night at the Athens Masonic Complex was very successful. We had a total of 11 candidates, all of whom received either a new license or an upgrade. Thanks to our VE team composed of Eric Mc Fadden, WD8RIF, John McCutcheon, N8XWO, Jason Licht, KG8JL and session coordinator Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ. All new technicians complied with the new rule by having applied for their Federal Registration Number (FRN) prior to the test and bringing that number to the test session. We did have a few upgraders who didn't bring a copy of their current license to the session. Just a reminder that for upgrades we need a printed copy (reference copy is fine) of your current license to submit with your paperwork.

Eric thanked Jeff and the other Volunteer Examiners for their work.

Eric reminded members that they should consider becoming Volunteer Examiners if they hold a General Class license or higher.

Jeff asked if the club should offer a free club membership to those who earned their licenses at the test session. Eric reminded the membership that the club usually offers a free membership to those who participate in the ACARA's annual Technician License Class and pass the test at the end-of-course VE session.

Drew McDaniel, W8MHV, made a motion that henceforth, a one-year membership should be offered to any Athens County residents who earn their initial license or a license-upgrade at an ACARA testing session.

Discussion ensued. Following the suggestion by Carl Denbow, N8VZ, that we might offer a membership to Athens County residents regardless of where they tested, Drew changed his motion: henceforth a one-year membership should be offered to any Athens County residents who earn their initial license or license-upgrade regardless of where they tested. Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, seconded the motion. The motion passed without dissent.

Old Business (continued)

Athens Hamfest – ~~Sunday, April 25, 2021~~

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reminded the membership that at the February meeting, the members had voted to postpone the Athens Hamfest until a date in late July or mid- to late-August and that we invite SCARF to participate in a combined ACARA/SCARF “All Athens County Hamfest”.

Eric reported that he has notified the ARRL of the cancelation/postponement of the Athens Hamfest.

Eric reported that he has notified the Athens Community Center of the cancelation/postponement of the Athens Hamfest. He was told at that time that the Community Center is currently not available for use on Sundays and it unclear when this will change. Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, suggested that if the Community Center is not available on the new date we might look at using the now-empty Elder-Beerman store in the Market on State.

Eric reported that he sent an email to Robert Peoples, N8UVM, the President of SCARF, to invite SCARF to participate in an ACARA/SCARF “All Athens County Hamfest”. Robert had replied that he would discuss this at the upcoming March 7 SCARF meeting. Having not heard back from Robert following the SCARF meeting, Eric sent a follow-up email on March 11 but has not yet received a reply.

Iron Furnace Trail Run – ~~Saturday, April 3, 2021~~

Event Sponsor: Southeastern Ohio Trail Runners / Michael Owen
<https://www.ironfurnacetrailrun.com/>

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that the Iron Furnace Trail Run website now states that the event has been canceled:

The 2021 Iron Furnace Trail Runs have been CANCELLED

Due to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) not approving or even reviewing special event permits until after May 31, we have cancelled the Iron Furnace Trail Runs for 2021. Unfortunately, this decision was out of our control.

Lake Hope Bicycle Race

Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, reported he has not yet been contacted by the event organizer with a new date for this event.

Old Business (continued)

ARRL Field Day – June 27-28, 2021

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that the ARRL has extended the special COVID-19 rules for 2021:

Class D stations may work all other Field Day stations, including other Class D stations, for points. This year, however, Class D and Class E stations will be limited to 150 W PEP output.

An aggregate club score will be published — just as it was done last year. The aggregate score will be a sum of all individual entries that attributed their score to that of a specific club.

Eric suggested that club members might feel comfortable in late June with the idea of performing a group Field Day operation. He will contact the Athens County Fair Board later this month to reserve the use of the Athens County Fairgrounds in case it is possible to perform a group operation

New Business

Membership Chairman

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that Ted Jacobson, W8KVK, had sent him contact information for two newly licensed hams in the area and offered to send this sort of information regularly to an ACARA Membership Chairman who could reach out to new hams in the area. Eric reported that, at this point, the ACARA doesn't have a formal Membership Chairman and added that such a person could also coordinate the ACARA's participation in the Club Commission Program, one of the benefits the ACARA gains from being an ARRL Affiliated Club (<http://www.arrl.org/affiliated-club-benefits>) that we are not currently taking advantage of. Eric explained that the ACARA could earn \$15 for each new ARRL membership or renewal of membership lapsed two years or more and could earn \$2 for each ARRL membership renewal.

Eric suggested that the Executive Committee might consider adding Membership Chairman as a formal position in the re-write of the club's Constitution and Bylaws.

Eric asked if a member was willing to volunteer to serve as Membership Chairman.

Carl Denbow, N8VZ, suggested that perhaps a volunteer might step forward after a return to normalcy.

New Business (continued)

Membership Chairman (continued)

During the discussion, it became clear that Treasurer Drew McDaniel, W8MHV, has already been performing many of the duties of a Membership Chairman and is happy to keep performing them. Eric said he will ask Ted Jacobson to send information on new hams in the area to Drew.

The Wall That Heals National Tour 2021

<https://www.vvmf.org/The-Wall-That-Heals/2021-Tour-Schedule/>

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, has contacted the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) and that Jeff has reserved the use of the special-event callsign "W8V" for the period of July 28 through August 2, 2021. Jeff has learned that the Wall will be at Tail-Great Park, not at the Athens County Fairgrounds as had been previously thought, and he is concerned that Ohio University will not grant ACARA the space to set up a station. Jeff has contacted the OU Radio Club (<https://www.qrz.com/db/W8PZS>) advisor Frank Van Graas to inquire about a joint ACARA / OU Radio Club operation.

Eric reported that Carl Denbow, N8VZ, has contacted the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW) about participation in the event.

Jeff reported he has a lead on another person at Ohio University involved in the Tour whom he will contact.

Carl suggested there should be space in the Peden Stadium parking lot for a station if we cannot get permission to set up closer to the actual traveling Wall.

Eric added that once a location is identified, we can contact Athens County 9-1-1 about use of the crank-up mobile tower.

New Business (continued)

Thunderbase 2022 – April 29-May 5, 2022

<https://scoutingevent.com/441-thunderbase>

Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, reported he has not learned anything more about this event. He reminded the members that anyone interested in participating should visit <https://www.scouting.org/> to perform the Youth Protection Training. He suggested that interested individuals might also consider becoming a Merit Badge Counselor. Anyone having questions may contact Jeff.

ARES Connect Program

Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, reminded members that the ARES Connect Program, a software tool used to track ARES volunteer-hours, is being retired at the end of June. Jeff is working on a WordPress add-in for the ARRL Ohio District Eight website that will provide similar functionality. He wants this new tool to become available before ARES Connect goes away; he thinks it might be available by the end of April.

Following a motion by Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, and a second by Carl Denbow, N8VZ, the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted by President and Secretary Eric McFadden, WD8RIF.