Matanuska Amateur Radio Association

Board Meeting

December 13, 2023

Meeting Called to Order at 7:05pm via Zoom.

Quorum Established – Scott, Ken, Shelia, John C, Don, TJ attended.

Approval of Agenda as a Guide with any Additions motioned by Don and Seconded by John C

President’s Report: Scott McCormick, KL7SLM

Looking forward to the new year

Vice-President’s Report: Ken Hudson, KL2HF

Nothing to report other than still putting together presentation schedule.

Treasurer’s Report: John Carrington, KL1XM

General account: $8,024.61 and have club mail from MSB to scan to the board to review.

Book account: $764.44 t-shirts will be a varied price, basically $5 over the cost of shirt.

Secretary’s Report: Shelia Olson, KL3SRO

Still working on minutes as busy schedule allows, will have MARA Voice out in January.

Website Facilitator: Don Bush, KL7JFT

Good except needing the signed minutes to post and t-shirt prices.

ARES/Repeater Report: Don Bush, KL7JFT

The 30 repeater is acting up from the snow; 33 being worked on, all others seem fine, have had $489 in donations, $292 from PayPal, will cost $345ish for cans/reflectors since current ones are not working properly but Mel can repair and have on hand as backup, will install new ones once they arrive.

Trailer Committee: Scott McCormick, KL7SLM

Good except need dug out and will talk to Casey about the snow plow and the shoving of the snow around our trailers and blocking us in; trailers need new tires in spring, will rotate and check all before buying any

VE Report: Ken Hudson, KL2HF

Licensing Classes: John Mears, AL7LA

Not present

Sunshine Committee: Shelia Olson, KL3SRO

1 card to send out.

Events Planner Shelia Olson, KL3SRO

Will discuss during ongoing business.

**Old Business**

1. **Meeting day change –** no recommendations from club members
2. **Presentation ideas –** back to the basics
3. **Saturday workshops –** use with new hams but need members to participate, Ken will check with WASI for availability, Brandon provided statement and board asked it to be included.

Below is a summary of the new ham trainings I would recommend doing as our regular club presentations.

Using a Nano VNA for Antenna Tuning - Getting antennas built and tuned is a common stumbling block for new hams. If we do a demo on how to tune basic dipoles and verticals with a Nano VNA that could help, make antenna projects more accessible for hams who are struggling. For the demonstration I could tune a dipole and a vertical right in the meeting room. By cutting the antennas for VHF they should fit the space reasonably well without too much coupling to the room. Demonstrating the Nano VNA would also help. The Nano VNA analysers are cheap, easy to find, and they work great. (I sold my Rig Expert analyser years ago and now use a Nano VNA exclusively).

Working with Coax - I've met a lot of hams who were never trained how to terminate coax when they tested for their licenses and were then unable to do antenna projects (I was one of those). For the demonstration I would recommend doing a quick introduction to some common coax types, and then showing how to slice and dice the ends to put on a connector. If we have a screen or big TV available, we could connect a camera to it and project the small coax up onto the big screen to make things more visible. If the presentation was short then that would leave time for hams to come up and ask their project-specific questions: using in-line female connectors, reverse polarity SMA connectors for BridgeCom radios, etc.

Connecting Transceivers to Computers - There are a hundred videos on YouTube about how to connect radios and computers, so this demo isn't technically needed. However, the point would be to put some experienced Elmers in front of the newer hams so that the newer hams have someone local to ask questions. For this I would recommend demonstrating two setups: one where the radio has the soundcard module built in, and a second where an external interface like a Signalink is needed. We could connect the computer to a big screen and walk the group through things like audio levels, the windows device manager, and the setup for a few handy programs. Again, not really needed since there are lots of videos out there, but having the presentation could bring out hams who need in-person help but are too shy to ask.

After those three presentations I would re-evaluate and see how things turned out. If we have a bunch of interested hams who want to do projects and events, then we could line up a summer contest/field operating schedule. If we have lots of requests for more training, then we come up with more presentations. If it's nothing but crickets, then we go back to the drawing board.

1. **Teaching Classes for Home School Students** – still logistics to figure out.
2. **Board member Emails** – TJ has setup new ones and waiting on the board to be ready to login, would be president@kl7jfu.com, board members will be their callsign@kl7jfu.com TJ is willing to help with the current emails that Bridget and Don administer

**Ongoing Business**

1. **Update on repeaters**–Don/KL7JFT

As stated above, plus 33 working on VHF and the UHF is very spotty.

1. **Holiday Party**, *\*POC: Shelia KL3SRO\**

December 29 Valley Church of Christ, at 7pm; Shelia, Betty, and Scott plan to meet earlier in the day to get set up and decorate.

1. **Ham of the Year**, *\*POC – George KL7GS\**

Person is chosen and when plaques are completes, will present to the winner.

1. **Elmer of the Year**, *\*POC – John KL1XM\**

Nothing submitted so far.

**New Business:**

1. **PJMS**

William Crume, KL5LD, spoke that he teaches STEM Classes and brought his radio to school and the students want a club, so he asked the board for help setting it up, what equipment to purchase, and provide classes to the students. School Club will meet on Tuesdays/Thursdays starting on January 9, kids are studying the technician book to be able to take the exam, Don will send info for William. The long-term goal is to have ham radio as an elective class at PJMS.

1. **Winter Field Day**

Discussion that the club could do winter field day on January 27-28 at PJMS if Brandon is available and if the MSBSD as well as the school are ok with the club using the facilities. Will have to complete and submit a facility use application. Brandon provided comments by email and the board stated to include them here. The idea occurred to me that there might be a winter field day opportunity with the school club. Holding an outdoor, contest-style WFD operation on short notice would be a challenge. It's hard to find people, a location, and hams who ae able to set up portable. However, if we wanted to show some support for the school club, we might be able to use WFD as a simple, show and tell day. What we would need is an indoor space to set up a radio or two, with access to outside through a window (for coax), and a space looking east to set up an antenna or two. If the school could provide a location, then I could set up a simple indoor demo with my portable gear. About two or three hours would be plenty of time to demonstrate setup and operation for HF. Keeping the event short and indoors makes it a lot easier to pull off. Also, we avoid the complexities of logging, coordinating operating bands, providing food and drinks, etc. It would basically just be a quick Saturday school club meeting, with a guest ham radio operator or two to demo some gear.

1. **Field Day**

Held in June, need a point of contact, location, and get things started soon so all the deadlines are met.

**Upcoming Events:**

1. **Licensing Exams,** *\*POC: Ken KL2HF\** December 23 @1900, WASI
2. **MARA Luncheon,** 12/28 @ 11:30 at Denali Family Restaurant
3. **MARA General Meeting/Christmas Party**, December 29 @1900, Valley Church of Christ
4. **MARA Board Meeting,** January 10 @1900, will be held via ZOOM during winter months as motioned by John C, seconded by Don, and passed unanimously of the quorum.

Donmotioned for meeting to be adjourned, Shelia seconded. Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

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 Shelia Olson, KL3SRO,

Secretary