

January 10, 2017 Meeting of the Bishop Amateur Radio Club

BARC's officers for 2017 are:

Paul Dostie (KK6BAF)	– President
Jeff Tong (AA7GK)	– Vice President
Terry Fenske (K6UN)	– Treasurer
Gordon Baldwin (KD6TLE)	– Secretary

Meeting called to order by President Paul at 7 pm

Number in attendance: 12

Old Business - Silver Peak repeater update

John (AD6NR) read the letter he prepared and sent to Dick Norton, the ARRL's SW Div. Director. Letter was FYI only; no help is being solicited from Dick Norton at this time. John read the letter to attendees. The message in the letter was that the bill for processing fees received by BARC from the Inyo National Forest for the club's Mazourka and Silver Peak repeater sites is beyond the ability of our radio club to pay. This is largely due to the volunteer status of the organization and the charter and nature of Amateur Radio which precludes using the radio service to generate profit. In the letter, John drew a distinction between the BARC and the for-profit repeater sites which also occupy these peaks. Businesses with repeaters have the financial ability to pay the amount billed while BARC membership does not. Inyo National Forest is requesting a total of about \$2300 at this time.

Paul and Rich asked John (AD6NR) some questions about the requested fee. John noted that the fee is predicated on the recovery of dollars spent on paperwork preparation – the fee has nothing to do with site remediation should the BARC leave (abandon) the repeater sites. The site remediation fee has not yet come into play in Inyo County, per Jeff Tong. Jeff went on to give examples of when remediation of a repeater site might become necessary and noted that each forest has the right to implement the fee or it may choose not to.

John (AD6NR) reported that he expects the processing fee to be reduced.

Treasurers Report

Terry reported that as of January 10th, BARC had income of \$175, expenses of \$294.37, and an ending checking balance of \$1387.60.

New Business – Award!

Paul presented John (AD6NR) with a 1st place award given by ARRL for John's outstanding score in a recent 10M contest.

New Business – Community Outreach

Paul suggested that BARC have a more formal plan for following up with visitors to BARC meetings. Paul cited the example of two young ladies who came to a recent

BARC meeting, expressing an interest in HAM radio. Unfortunately for them, this meeting had a speaker who gave a highly technical presentation which could have been discouraging to someone with a budding interest in getting into HAM radio. A comment was made that Bill (KK6HTM) might know one or both of these people. It was suggested that it would be beneficial to the club and visitors if BARC has a more formalized process to follow up with visitors to reinforce the fun and value of HAM radio and to answer questions.

Paul stated that Home Street School is eager for a HAM presentation. Paul noted that Erin Rodriguez with the school, is the BARC point of contact to set something up. Paul would like to have a volunteer HF operator for this project. He also is looking for someone to draft a 10 minute presentation suitable for an 8th grade audience. He requested a draft ready to review at the February meeting. Phil volunteered and will put together a kids level power point, Paul will set up the station, and Len will be the HF operator. We will also do some VHF and UHF contacts as part of the demonstration.

New Business – Field Day

It was noted that Field Day 2016 was sparsely attended. A question was raised regarding availability of Kurt's portable towers. Might these be available for use at the fairground? Rich and Jim each said they have towers that might be used but transportation to/from the fairgrounds would be in issue. Phil asked if anyone had a television antenna rotator, as one might be used to move a small directional antenna during Field Day. Terry noted that VHF/UHF is not useful for adding to points during Field Day.

To prepare for 2016 Field Day, much effort was put into community outreach, but it yielded limited benefits. What should be focus on? Contesting or outreach or can we be successful doing both?

Paul described a trailer set up for working satellites. Phil described an exciting experience he had contacting an astronaut.

New Business – Fund Raising

Paul is interested in a fund raising project for the club with the goal of making enough money to do necessary repairs and upgrades to Mazourka repeater. Some of the key maintenance items noted were antennas, feed lines, batteries, and charging system. John (AD6NR) gave an overview of how the charging system works at this time and suggested that the repeater needs an EM Panel, circulator, and filters. The estimate for maintenance costs is \$2000. Paul has good batteries to donate if they can be taken to the repeater. Suggested that the batteries be reconfigured from the present primary and back-up systems to a just a single bank of batteries in one power system. John (AD6NR) noted that we might have a lot of charging potential in the site's solar panels but will not know until we can measure the open circuit voltage and the capacity. Paul noted that most solar panels loose about one percent of charging capacity per year over life of the panel. Rich estimated the next maintenance visit could not happen until at least March, possibly not until May due to snow conditions on the road.

To raise the money needed for site upkeep, Paul suggested a gun raffle. Jeff Tong commented that his group had great luck raising money through a gun raffle. The raffle would be held on Sunday of Mule Days so that people who entered from Mule Days would be in Bishop when the winners were announced. Phil offered to donate his Marlin 22 to the raffle effort. He also suggested a second prize of \$500 in food. Jeff mentioned other possible prizes such as Yeti coolers and a cord of wood.

Paul nominated Ed Carlson to head up the raffle effort.

New Business – Partnership with Emergency Response Agencies

Per John, (AD6NR), Dr. Johnson has retired. He was a notable advocate for teaming with BARC to assure that his hospitals also had the potential of HAM radio to bolster communications during a local or regional emergency situation.

John (AD6NR) commented that we no longer have “marching orders” or anyone to report to showcase our knowledge, skills and abilities to work with the hospitals in emergencies. Additionally, he is concerned that BARC may be less skilled at building relationships of this kind with served agencies. A reason for this skills deficit is that BARC lacks a formalized “disaster mission statement” which can be clearly and concisely communicated by BARC representatives to decision makers of the agencies we wish to serve. Such a mission statement is necessary to help them see the value of working with us. However, first on the list is putting together the procedure we intend to use showing how we intend to communicate with ourselves! We need a set of basic processes to assure we can talk between ourselves and we need the basics of our own communication plan to put before agencies to help establish our credibility. Then, we can roll out our “elevator pitch” (disaster mission statement) to begin forging supportive links with the hospitals we want to work with. He asked Rich KF6YLW to take the lead to draft just this portion of an Emergency Action Plan. Rich asked John to outline what he has in mind to give Rich a starting point. We need to have procedures that answer key questions of who, what, why, where, when, and how. Other clubs or ARRL may have templates we can use.

Jeff stated that we need to be creditable with public services.

It was reported that the NV Hospital net has collapsed due to some significant technical issues with a key repeater site. Echolink is not being used. After the state-wide net failed, some NV hospitals are contacting some other hospitals in NV using the SNARS radio net. Unfortunately, now not all NV hospitals are able to communicate with the other facilities as they could before the technical problem manifested.

New Business – More about Mazourka

It was suggested that we might need a bucket truck or a man lift to remove antennas and hardware from the wooden poles next to the repeater on Mazourka Peak. The old antennas are not in the best condition and may be generating noise. Jeff commented that the forest service would prefer that we have steel towers in place of the wooden poles we have now. It is felt that the poles may not be safe to climb, so a lift vehicle might be

necessary. It was noted that for some types of lift vehicles, the ground must be level and smooth.

The repeater building is sitting on old railroad ties and they are not in the best shape. John (AD6NR) suggested that we consider how to lift the shack, remove the old wooden supports and replace with new wood.

It was suggested that BARC organize a site visit to the peak site to prepare a work plan and prioritize maintenance for this location.

Meeting Adjourned at about 9 PM.

Gordon Baldwin
KD6TLE
Secretary
Bishop Amateur Radio Club, Inc.