



January 9, 2018 Meeting Minutes of the Bishop Amateur Radio Club

BARC's officers for 2018 are:

Paul Dostie	(KK6BAF)	– President
Jeff Tong	(AA7GK)	– Vice President
Terry Fenske	(K6UN)	– Treasurer
Noam Shendar	(NØAMS)	– Secretary

Meeting called to order by President Paul Dostie (KK6BAF) at about 7 PM. The meeting was held at the Salvation Army building in Bishop, CA.

Number in attendance: 11. These were AD6NR, AA7GK, K6UN, W6PH, WA6IQO, NW6C, K6END, KD6TLE, W6WWY, KF6YLW, KK6BAF

Those present were not asked to provide name or call sign.

Minutes

No minutes were generated for the December 2017 as this was not a club meeting but a potluck dinner. No note to this effect was generated – but needs to be – to keep club records consistent. This will be corrected and a “minutes” document will be submitted by KD6TLE for the December club activity. AD6NR also pointed out there should have been a Board of Directors meeting in 2017, complete with agenda and minutes. This did not happen, either. It was determined that the problem could be rectified by having the Board of Directors meet prior to the February meeting.

Treasurer's Report

Terry (K6UN) provided the BARC financial report for the period December 12, 2017 through January 9, 2018. BARC had total expenses of \$117.51 and income of \$20.00. Our ending checking balance for this period is \$3,134.04.

Old Business – Raffle Update

Terry (K6UN) reported that the club can initiate raffle ticket sales at any time although the tickets are not printed as of yet. He committed to have them ready for the February meeting. Tickets are to go for five dollars (\$5) each or five tickets for twenty dollars (\$20). A question was raised of whether club members and their immediate families should be eligible to buy tickets. Paul commented that to avoid any perceived unfairness, club members and their immediate families will not be able to buy raffle tickets. The entrance to Vons was talked about as the ideal site to set up a table to sell the tickets. Those who can volunteer to help with raffle ticket sales should contact Paul (KK6BAF). Paul will be contacting Vons to seek permission for BARC's ticket sales.

Old Business – Fundraising Sale of Vintage Electronics in Storage with Jon (NW6C)

Jon sold some materials and generated \$40 for BARC. Jon also explained that Walter Hill, late of Bishop and a Silent Key had two storage lockers containing more electronics that the club might be able to sell to generate income. He explained that the owners of the storage facility are very anxious to have this equipment removed in order to free up the storage space for rental. Jon and Mark (W6WWA) will be trying to coordinate with the owners of the storage facility this week to see what is still in storage and what might be sold.

Old Business – Mazourka Peak Repeater Upgrades

After the recent failure of the 2-meter Station Master antenna that had been rehabbed and re-installed at the Mazourka Peak repeater, the decision was made to move ahead with the purchase and installation of a new Hustler 616-1448 twenty-foot-long repeater site antenna to replace the defective one. The new antenna was installed and yielded an increase of 10 dB. The coverage of the Mazourka antenna is greater, and clearer communication has been noted to the north, east, and south of Mazourka Peak.

There have been problems with solar panels and batteries at the repeater site. To fix this, Paul (KK6BAF), John (AD6NR), Jon (NW6C), Jeff (AA7GK), Mark (W6WWA), and others have contributed time and resources to get Mazourka up and functioning in a reliable manner. New, high capacity, 350-watt solar panels were donated and secured atop the repeater building. One faces west, one south, and one east. AGM batteries (not lead-acid) were installed and linked to the panels. But after these upgrades, the system went down. An investigation commenced. Was battery conditioning an issue? What did we not know about solar systems that was contributing to the power failures we were experiencing?

The new panels were placed so as to accommodate the sun during any day of the year. Unfortunately, some panels cast shadows on other panels, reducing their output. We learned that the shaded panels absorbed power from the illuminated panels but blocking diodes could stop the backflow of power. Subsequently, these diodes were obtained and will be installed at the earliest opportunity. At that time, some minor wiring changes will also be implemented to reflect best practice engineering standards. Presently, the east and west panels are disconnected and the repeater is being powered only by the south panel. John (AD6NR) is confident that Mazourka will work through the winter even if the planned changes are not made at this time.

- It was also noted that using automobile battery capacity tests is not a good gauge for evaluating a power supply battery. Lead-acid batteries sulfate more easily under low current draw conditions.
- The small steel box and its contents just west of the repeater building is the property of the Forest Service and they would like to recover it.

Old Business – Getting Three Repeaters (Antelope, Leviathan, Conway Summit) Operational and Linked and Adding a Link from Silver Peak to Mammoth Mountain Repeater

Mammoth Lakes repeater is up and running and linked to Silver Peak. John (AD6NR), Mark (W6WWA), and others are working to find a reliable link between Silver Peak and Conway. Currently, Conway hears Silver but Silver cannot hear Conway on UHF. The Silver Peak repeater that should be hearing Conway is overpowered by another radio service from a nearby repeater facility. Close physical proximity and very close radio frequencies complicate this issue.

A workaround is being attempted but, so far, no available relay site has been found, except for June Mountain. June Mountain would work but inquiries to the person in charge of the repeater facility there have not been replied to as of yet. No other suitable location is known at this time.

Old Business – Exploring Placing a Repeater Radio Facility above the Town of Cerro Gordo

Per Rich (KF6YLW), Keith (W6KRF) has committed to provide the map coordinates for a prospective repeater building that BARC might be given permission to use. Keith's report is pending. Paul (KK6BAF) noted that there are a number of potential locations for a BARC repeater site above Cerro Gordo. John (AD6NR) observed that if BARC wants to add a repeater on Cerro Gordo to those already in place or in the works (Conway, Leviathan, Antelope, Mammoth Lakes, Silver, and Mazourka) a complete re-engineering of the entire BARC repeater system might be necessary. This would likely involve a significant capital outlay for new equipment.

For example, when BARC is able to link to Conway, Leviathan, and Antelope, those HAMS to the north are unlikely to want to listen to Owens Valley radio chatter. If it were possible to use a process like the CARLA system has, an "A" and "B" tone for local traffic and out of the area traffic would solve the issue. But the equipment we currently own will not support this sort of selective operation. Electronic gear that does this is very expensive.

Old Business – BARC Organization May Be Challenged to Meet Requests for Help with Bishop Ultramarathon

The organizer of the Bishop Ultramarathon has asked BARC to support this event by providing communications at checkpoints along the route. This will require a considerable number of HAM volunteers in order to staff the various checkpoints. Paul (KK6BAF) stated that it will take 20 HAMS to provide communications for this ultramarathon. In the past, we have provided help but now with fewer and older active club members, it is probable that it will be more difficult to meet requests for help in the future. Ed (K6END) suggested that HAM volunteers provide radio communications only, and not get involved with other duties like tracking runners. VHF radios will do the job. The race will take place June 2, 2018.

Keith (W6KRF) volunteered to coordinate BARC's involvement in this event. As the person in charge, he will need to go to all organizational planning events. Keith ought to have a back-up person but this person has not been named as of yet. Kurt (W6PH) volunteered to attend the first of the race organizational meetings.

New Business – Inappropriate Rules Promulgated by ARRL Board of Directors

Kurt (W6PH) provided an overview of some ARRL leadership issues generating member concerns across the country. Kurt outlined the issue as follows:

- ARRL has 15 members of the Board of Directors. These individuals make all policies for the ARRL. They meet annually, next on this January 19th. In November 2017 Dick Norton, who is the Orange Section Director (Orange Section is the one BARC is in), was censured by the ARRL Board of Directors. It is felt by many that the censure was unjustified and improper.
- In January of 2017, a new Code of Conduct was adopted for members of the Board of Directors. One paragraph in the code should never have become a part of the code. It states that once a decision has been made by the board, there shall be no criticism of it by a board member. Additionally, there shall be no explanation of contrary view points or identification of who voted for or against any item of board business.
- Another part of the Code allows the elections and ethics committee members the power to ban HAMS from running for elected office within the ARRL. This is also cause for concern, as it will tend to curtail the free flow of ideas and constrain discussions to the accepted party line.
- In November at the Visalia HAM convention, Dick Norton presented information about the new Code but did not speak negatively of it. However, many in the audience did have negative things to say about the restrictive Code of Conduct. Unfortunately, Dick Norton was accused of and censured for being critical and not supporting the Board's Code of Conduct program, even though he never spoke out against it.
- Another inappropriate pending motion to give a vote to the Board President and the 1st and 2nd Vice Presidents. These are un-elected positions, appointed by the Board and, unlike the elected directors, unaccountable to any constituents.
- Finally, there a motion in front of the ARRL Board to permit it to summarily terminate the ARRL membership of any HAM "for cause." However, there is no definition of what "for cause" means.

Kurt and other BARC members in attendance believe these concerns constitute a misuse of the Board's powers. The censuring, the blocking candidates from ARRL elections, and the two pending motions are not appropriate for a membership-driven organization. A vote was taken and passed to have Kurt craft a letter on behalf of the BARC to the 15 Directors expressing disapproval of the censure of Dick Norton and urging the ARRL to remove the offending paragraph and correct the other issues noted above.

New Business – FYI

Ed (K6END) was hiking out of Whitney Portal recently. He was carrying his SAR radio. He heard Eastern Sierra Transit communicating on SAR frequencies.

New Business – 2M SSB Dipoles

On behalf of John (K6MWK), Gordon (KD6TLE) advised BARC members that if a member is lacking a suitable antenna and is interested but unable to participate in the BARC 1900 Hrs. 2M SSB Saturday net, John may be able to provide a simple, 2M dipole that should work within Owens Valley, even on low power. The intention here is to try and help introduce HAMs who are interested to a lesser used but very enjoyable mode of communication. Therefore, it is important that this tool be used, not placed on a shelf to add to a collection of radio gear.

Meeting adjourned at about 8:15 PM.

Gordon Baldwin (KD6TLE)

Standing in for BARC Secretary, Noam Shendar (NØAMS)

Bishop Amateur Radio Club, Inc.