Minutes of the regular monthly meeting of the Wheaton Community Radio Amateurs for May 2022

The meeting was called to order by at 1930 hours at 418 N. County Farm Road, Wheaton, Illinois by Mark Spoo, ARS N9VDQ as the president and regular presiding officer of the corporation, and the minutes where taken by Steve Peterson, ARS N9OA, as the secretary and regular recording officer of the corporation.

Those in attendance were as follows (listed by their Amateur Radia3o Service call sign) in random order: N9MWF, N9HQ, N0MO, N9VDQ, W9RAF, N9OA, KC9YFi, AC9VW, KA3HSW, N9CBA, WA9SGF, KD9JSA

Timothy Wheeler made a motion (seconded by George Henry) to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Mark Spoo made a motion (seconded by Tom Geletka) to approve the minutes for the March and April meetings. Motion carried.

The president opened with remarks and followed those remarks with suggestions for improvement of the club by those in attendance. A summary of those remarks follow:

* Mark Spoo, N9VDQ, president:
  + Good evening.
  + For those of you who don't know me I am Mark Spoo N9VDQ.
  + I have been elected president for a 2 year term as president because NO ONE ELSE CARED. It was not fair to Roger Bassett or the club to leave the position empty.  With that said here I sit ready to take on the responsibilities of a job no one wanted.
  + I know I have ruffled many feathers in the past and will most likely continue to ruffle feathers I do not apologize for.
  + The terms "we can’t, we have never done it that way before, it's not in the bylaws are now in the past." If the special Olympics last week showed anything it is that WCRA can do anything and accomplish anything if there are dedicated people to do the job.
  + Of the goals I have and there are a few the main one is to get WCRA out of the rapidly and increasingly on a downward spiral of decreasing membership and lack of participation. Currently this club has a membership of 47 people a significantly low number than in past years and 4 of those members do NOT live in the Wheaton area let alone in the state of Illinois.  WE MUST INCREASE OUR MEMBERSHIP and significantly increase this membership.
  + WCRA is what all of its members make it not just the officers and active member's do.
  + COVID for practical purposes is what it is and meetings in person will be the new normal. Unless change by official declaration ALL MEETINGS WILL BE LIVE AND IN PERSON. WE WILL NO LONGER BE USING ZOOM FOR GENERAL MEETINGS. As Secretary Steve Peterson will keep accurate minutes as he is know to do and those minutes will be posted to the web site in a timely manner for all to review.   This club needs to become more active in activities, and community service. This is not going to be done by the same 8 to 10 people that do everything. If you desire to be a member of WCRA you must participate.
  + I would like to thank Tom Geletka for his organization activities the Fox Hunting group. I was totally in the dark of how active the Fox hunting group is and Tom I extend my thanks and apologize for not knowing this in the past. I would also like to thank Tim Wheeler and Steve Peterson for the VE testing group activities.
  + As president I am holding each and every member responsible for recruiting 1 new member to WCRA in the next 2 years. I don't care if it is a friend, a spouse, a relative, and if you live in Cook County a dead relative as long as they participate. As long as they show an interest in ham radio, pay their dues and remain active it will improve the club. It also means we will be more active.
  + Some of my other goals are.  I would like to see someone pick up what Dale Kwarta had done with education, I would like to see WCRA more active in community events that DO NOT involve communications, I would like to see WCRA do more social events other that sit in a meeting and listen to me ramble.
  + My second main goal is to review and update the bylaws of WCRA. The copy of the bylaws that I received reference 1999. That's a long time ago and these bylaws need to be updated. Regardless of the work, cost and effort the bylaws will change to reflect the current decade at least. Records are NO LONGER kept in hard bound books, while meeting days are spelled out meeting times are not. The bylaws get referred to all the time when changes want to be made but has anyone ever read the 7 page document?  The excuse of "we never did this that way, that's not how we did it before, or they bylaws say or don't say" are over.
  + My final goal is more of an observation and or a comment.
  + Ham Radio in the metro area of Chicago is dying a slow death. The ham fest's of 10-15 years ago no longer exist. EBay, Amazon and the internet have all but killed those, repeaters at least in the drive time hours are dead, and the thought that ham radio is going to replace any and all communication in a disaster weather man made or natural are non-existent with the harden communication systems in the metro Chicago western suburbs.
  + As a Club we have to come up with a new idea to gain membership and remain relative, active, and viable. At this point I will entertain any idea to have the club remain or increase its relativity and increase its activity. As long as it is not immoral or illegal I am all ears.
  + One thing I would like to see (attention RAB) is thought to the linking of repeaters while not all the time but at least the capability, potentially the connection of a repeater to the outside world, Yes I am aware of the new repeater that was purchased and what it is capable of doing. Let make this things happen without delay.
  + Finally I am the president of this club and have one vote just as any other member of this club has. This club will succeed or fold solely based on the activities and willingness of ALL its members not just a few active ones. As a member if the club fails it is because WE ALL FAILED not just a board or the RAB made it fail.
  + ALL of the MEMBERS made it fail.
  + You now now who is am and where I stand I would now like the each member to introduce themselves with there name and call sign and give one suggestion of what could improve the club over the next 2 years.  Starting with Vice President Roger Bassett.
* Roger Bassett, W9RAF stated that we need good questions, more interesting programs (which he indicated he is still working on) As an example of programs, he mentioned that next month’s program is for members to bring their radios and/or information about them to the next meeting to discuss what they do and don’t like about it and why they carry it. This would be a “show and tell” type program.
* Steve Peterson, N9OA suggested that yelling and arguing is the reason why we have a decline in membership.
* Mike Wilson, N0MO posited that we need a baseline of fellowship with in the club and to recognize that we are all “radio people” and that we ought to foster and build upon that. We should all be open to communication outside of the club meetings.
* David Weinheimer, AC9VW offered to assist with ARRL club grants which he has already started investigating.
* Tom Geletka, N9CBA declared that we need programs that are not focused on emergency management or weather, that we need to streamline the meeting, and increase the time for socialization after the meeting.
* Greg Schmidt, WA9SGF proposed that our attendance is low due to lack of interest in what we are doing. Outdoor enthusiast clubs use amateur radio only as a tool.
* John Cheney, N9MWF voiced that the club cannot be a single-purpose club and that public service cannot be the only thing going on. Fox hunting could be a program. News, etc., could be added to the nets to add value (an example would be what the club is currently doing.) The same 10-15 people do everything which he perceives to be an issue.
* Timothy Wheeler, KC9YFI postulated that a disconnect exists within the group. He believes that the club lacks anything inviting and that “club politics” often get in the way. Members who formed our base have moved south to warmer weather or have passed on and we have not replaced their talent (while some of the talent cannot be replaced). He also opined that the club has become hyper-focused on public service. He believes that the base of membership needs to be enlarged so that members who only desire to do some events are able to do so. He also suggested that a breakfast or lunch and parks on the air activities could be used so bolster participation in multiple types of events.
* Ken Kwasniewski, N9HQ declined to offer comment; saying, “pass.”

The treasurer’s report was table by unanimous consent due to the absence of Carol Schroeder.

Steve Peterson made the secretary’s report and indicated that the majority of records delivered to him by his successor have been imaged with a plan to do so with all of the records

Mike Wilson reported that the new DR2X repeater has been received and is in the possession of the RAB. Timothy will be testing it at the Lilac Parade.

On behalf of the RAB, Timothy Wheeler reported that the new repeater was received and that they will be meeting to discuss written documentation on how the new technologies should and should not be used. This repeater will go on the 145.31 pair and the 440 repeater site will receive the former 145.31 repeater. In response to a question, Timothy indicated that the 220 repeater is on the air at the home of Don Motz and the antenna is about 20 feet AGL. The RAB requests that any member with a potential repeater site notify them and is willing to do research regarding site ownership, etc., if the reporting member does not wish to do so.

Mark Spoo reported that the Hamletter was being discontinued and would be replaced with the good work Kelsey Schroeder is doing on the website. Ken Kwasniewski will be assisting Kelsey with her ongoing efforts.

Mark Spoo also reported that public relations committee is being disbanded and that vacant committee position would not be filled. He stated, “public relations is now all of our responsibility.”

Mark Spoo gave the membership report saying that he will be assuming those duties.

Mike Wilson reported on the activities of the public service committee and thanking members for participation as follows:

* Thank you to all that assisted with the Special Olympics, members and friends of the club.
  + N9VDQ
  + KC9YFI
  + N9HQ
  + N9OA
  + KC9IJO
  + AC9VW
  + N0MO
  + N9MWF
  + KD9KJX
  + KD9ODH
* Lilac Parade Marshal meeting 5/12, 1900 @ Lombard Log Cabin.
* Lilac Parade 5/15, 1100 meet at Glenbard East HS
* Elmhurst Memorial Day Parade, 5/30 email WD9END with York ARC, wd9end@arrl.net
* Bank Of America 13.1, 6/5. Rob needs a few more volunteers
* Wheaton Parade, 7/4
* Tour de Cure 9/25. Will be led by WCRA with participation from many area amateurs
* Bank Of American Chicago Marathon, 10/9

Mark Spoo added that as of the information available as of the current date and time it is our understanding that one who is not a dues-paying member Is not covered by our insurance.

For the CSU committee, Mike Wilson reported that the CSU is at is regular storage location and that the 12V system voltage drop is being investigated. Timothy will be bringing it to his home for maintenance and further streamlining of items stored thereon. Rooger Bassett is still actively working with Winfield Fire Protection district for winter storage inside of their station two.

Mark Spoo indicated that he had no report for the interference committee.

There was no report from the vacant training committee.

Timothy Wheeler reported for the VE committee that there was one examinee at the last session and that he did not pass either attempt. There is a goal to hold VE sessions on a regularly-scheduled basis.

Roger Basset announced the evening program as being an ARDEN presentation by Mike Wilson.

For the club nets, Timothy Wheeler reported that participation is down and is looking for content ideas.

Mark Spoo reported that the board will be discussing the hamfest to come.

Timothy Wheeler reported that he has been unable to secure a new field day site. Mark Spoo requested that he look into members pooling their scores from their own individual efforts.

During continuing business, Tom Sarlitto volunteered to handle social media publicity for the club.

There was no new business.

Timothy Wheeler made a motion (seconded by Tom Geletka) to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40pm

|s| Stephen J. Peterson