

Northeast Iowa Radio Amateur Association
WØMG MEETING MINUTES; 12 July 2014

The July meeting of the Northeast Iowa Radio Amateur Association (NIRAA) was held at 7:00 pm at the American Red Cross building in Waterloo on July 12, 2014.

President Dave Knittel (KØCQH) called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm and passed a sign-up sheet for attendees to sign. Unfortunately, I can not seem to find it so I may update these minutes at a later date.

Also, I tried to record the meeting rather than take notes to generate this report. It was somewhat of a failure as some of it was not understandable. Therefore, I am summarizing and will not use audio notes in the future.

Introductions: Each member present introduced themselves and new members were welcomed.

Secretary and Treasurer's Reports:

Motions were made and seconded to approve the Treasurer's report as well as the Secretary's minutes. Both were approved.

Old Business: Stan (WØSJ) announced that the rental of the shelter house at Island Park, \$20.00, was returned to him since we were unable to use that location for our 'Junk in the Trunk' swapmeet due to flood waters.

New Business:

- A motion was made, seconded, and approved to reimburse Chuck (WØALO) for the cost of hotdogs, brats, and buns for field day.
- A lengthy discussion on repeater related issues consumed pretty much the balance of the meeting: Discussed were upgrades to the ID'er on the .94 repeater located at the water tower. Many suggestions were made. Buying a new S-Comm 7330 controller, swapping controllers between the water tower and the hospital; eliminating the .94 repeater at the hospital and replacing it with something different, perhaps D-Star on 2m.

We should not abandon the hospital site because we have lots of room there as well as fine 8-channel voting equipment. Tower is structurally sound and we have good antennas there.

Chris gave an example of a repeater in the Indianapolis area with 8 receiver sites and a range of about 150 miles!

Chris would welcome help from people willing to help with repeater upgrades.

Don (W9DRR) mentioned that it all is a matter of what we want the repeater to do for us. There is much we can do with the existing equipment and much more we can do with some of the more advanced equipment now available. We could link multiple receiver sites to multiple transmitter sites and simulcast using GPS to phase lock the transmitters.

Cheapest immediate solution would be to merely swap ID'ers between the two repeater sites. W9DRR has offered an All-Star controller which would give us the ability to program the ID'er remotely, but we would need to provide a Pentium level computer. We would just need the time to interface it.

.94 repeater at water tower needs to be gone through and would take just a couple days to interface the All-Star controller to it. The club, also, own an MSF5000 repeater. We have all the building blocks to improve our repeater situation, we just need time.

There was some discussion of setting up EchoLink on the 444.975 repeater at the hospital. It would require an internet link and much discussion took place on ways to do that. Also discussed was putting in a D-Star repeater at the hospital.

This discussion concluded with Chris stating that he would contact the hospital and explain the services the local ARES group offers and what we could offer with a few minor equipment upgrades. He will discuss the need for an internet connection and the possibility of connection to the hospital's network. He will put together a document listing all of the equipment we currently have, what we might acquire and the time and cost to complete several different possible systems.

RAGBRAI: Dave (KØCQH) discussed the need for communications volunteers to work during the time the Register's Annual Great Bicycle Race Across Iowa (RAGBRAI) participants would be in Waverly. Interested volunteers were to leave their name and call with Dave at the conclusion of the meeting. Dates of the event are 24-25 July.

Thunder in the Valley air show: Chuck (WØALO) discussed the air show activities: Radio should arrive in 2-3 weeks. They are cutting down on the number of volunteers this year. He would like the radio room to be attended by at least two people at all times. Dates: 23-24 August.

There will be no official meeting in August, but, as we do each year after field day, we will be meeting at Lookout Park to socialize and operate from the shelter house. Date: Aug 9, 7:00 PM.

Mark (N8TWO) mentioned the Boy Scouts Jamboree On The Air (JOTA) coming up in October and is soliciting volunteers to help with that.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn. Meeting adjourned

The evening's program was a discussion of the lessons learned from this year's field day.

Submitted by:
Richard Nelson, Secretary.