

22 April 2022

FIARC Meeting Minutes – 26 March 2022

Attendees:

N7NW – Hal Goodell	KE7PGD – AP Templet
AC7QN – Chuck Kemmer	KI7CQM – Jim Braden
W7JC – Jerry Cerny	K7ND – Jim Christianson
K1GCF – Gail Ferguson	KJ7JCB – Paul Thorpe
K7CRZ – Jeff Ferguson	KG7OGO – Doug Wilson
WA7KCK – Ken Rowling	N7BRR – Brian Hevly
Winston Lawson(?)	NN7D – Doug Munday
KC7CGE – Scott Cummins	KI7CQS – David Federighi
KJ7RVR – Jane Tollett	

The March 26th FIARC meeting was a welcome opportunity for face-to-face dialog for a change - thanks to all for attending, Gail Ferguson for the cookies, and a warm welcome to the folks from Canterwood.

1. Election of Officers

Result: Hal Goodell - President, Jim Braden - Vice President, and Jane Tollett - Secretary/Treasurer (no dues and no funds for the club, per se, so no treasurer functions).

2. Updates from Hal

- We could help the FICRA Trust with identification of final equipment for their Emergency Response organization. The Washington State grant the Trust has for that equipment is a reimbursable grant and our last submission date is June of 2023 (Jim had gotten an extension to 2023, not 2022 as he stated). FIARC continues to bring new technology to the fore (see below), but the FICRA Trust Emergency Prep (EP) program needs to settle the communication equipment details to get the system ready for training and use.

- We can also help the EP organization by suggesting, and helping to install battery charger manifolds, cabinetry outside the EOC comm room, and such. A listing of what will need to be done is step one and Doug Nelson will lead that effort and be the lead on installation.

- Hal reviewed the Mike and Key ARC swap meet in Puyallup (Fairgrounds) from the weekend before. It was successful.

3. Jeff Ferguson - ARES

- The ARES practice session scheduled for April 30th was discussed. Jeff Ferguson has been tasked with planning this exercise for the Peninsula Amateur Radio Emergency Team (PARET), aka the Peninsula Team, which is one of five teams composing District 5 ARES covering all of Pierce County. Rob Allen (KG7JWD) is the PARET Emergency Coordinator (EC), head of the Peninsula Team and leader of this exercise. The session is a statewide quarterly EOC-to-EOC exercise involving a great many EOC's within and adjacent to Washington State operated by many

different organizations from the Washington State EOC level down to local community EOC's, such as Fox Island. District 5 ARES Peninsula Team, which will be supporting the Fox Island EOC, is just one of the many organizations involved in the statewide exercise. Our primary EOC is called the PMACC (Peninsula Multi Agency Communications Center) which is physically located in the Fire District 5 Headquarters Building, Gig Harbor. ARES has their own radio room there. Our EP team will be taking advantage of that date to do an exercise here on Fox Island. We still need to decide how FIARC will be participating, as it is a good training opportunity.

- Jeff described the activities planned for ARES for the 30th. He also presented some new comm tools for the EP team to consider using in an emergency. One is a chat system (BeeBeep) which provides the capacity for computers to easily and efficiently network wirelessly within and around NCC affording the ability to transfer all types of files, conduct chats, share screens and exchange voice messages wirelessly with no need for Internet service or a server while employing nothing more than a wireless router (note, 12V power supply required when electrical grid is down). BeeBeep would be helpful in the proximity of the Community Center and was demonstrated after the meeting.

- Another communication tool is for "welfare message" traffic (outbound only). Welfare messages are personal messages sent from victims inside the disaster zone to family and friends outside the disaster zone first via digital radio transmission and then, through employment of digital HF radio "gateways" which have functional Internet service outside the disaster zone, transferred automatically to the Internet to be received as regular email by family and friends outside the disaster zone. See Attachment A. These are to be considered by the EP organization as they settle on the makeup of the comm system.

- As a separate issue we discussed the efforts of Adam Zimmerman (KI7SSD), a Peninsula Team member and teacher within the Peninsula District, who conducted a propagation survey from various schools employing a handheld transceiver during the last EOC-to-EOC exercise. While serving as voice net control during that exercise I created a propagation report based on that testing which Adam is now using to seek support in the school district for amateur radio comms equipment which could be used at school sites to communicate through PARET in the event of a disaster that occurs while children are in school. Adam has promised to update Jeff if any progress is made with the school district. At this point no such system exists, and there is no plan on the part of the school district to pursue the opportunity at this time. If Adam informs Jeff any progress is being made, he will inform us all as a matter of general interest.

- As regards the GoKit, the ARES team at the Fox Island EOC (FIEOC) will be employing an ARES GoKit. We will need to set up in the NCC radio room employing one of the antennas. While the GoKit is designed to function autonomously for the purposes of this exercise, and during an actual disaster, being co-located with Fox Island's net control operator in the radio room will be much more effective. The ARES team also needs to be in range of NCC's wireless LAN, which it will be in the radio room.

4. Bridge Update – Jim Braden

- The County is starting to get interested in this, but action is still a long way off. Pierce County Public Works has verbally recommended the bridge be replaced but no details yet.
- Again, none of this means that there will not be some bridge repairs in the meanwhile.

5. Emergency Response – AP Templet

- Continuing to try to get more block coordinators.
- Working with Jeff Ferguson on the Welfare Message system (and I assume how to get this out to the block coordinators)

6. Ukraine and radio transmissions – Jane Tollett

- Discussion ensued on not trying to get Ukraine persons in Ukraine to transmit out due to their becoming a target for ordinance from Russia.

<http://www.arrl.org/news/ukraine-maintains-ham-radio-silence-in-state-of-emergency>

7. Ham radio "Elmers" - Jane Tollett

- Hal is our universal "Elmer" (and very valued as well)
- Daniel Stevenson puts on the License Class and is looking at scheduling one.
- Perhaps have a list of Elmers after the class is complete who will be available.
- Reminder the current question pool expires 6.22

8. Our next meeting will be April 23rd and tentatively at the Nichols Community Center.

Respectfully recorded, Jane Tollett, Secretary

Attachment

Welfare Traffic: personal email messages transmitted outside disaster zone via radio frequency to the Internet

Scenario: Phone and Internet infrastructure down medium to long term (e.g. aftermath of a full rip subduction zone earthquake)

Facilitated by Fox Island Emergency Prep Team or readily trained volunteers

Facilitated by District 5 ARES Peninsula Team

Fox Island Community
Personal messages collected as text files (500 character max)

Carried on phone, tablet, thumb drive SD

Nichols Community Center
Messages downloaded to LAN connected computer

Transferred via LAN messenger (R00RFFD)

Fox Island EOC
ARES operator cuts and pastes, completes Winlink template

Winlink message transmitted digitally

ARES HF Relay Station – Gig Harbor
ARES operator edits message format for RMS gateway

Transmitted via HF up to worldwide

RMS Gateway – Outside Disaster Area
Message automatically emailed – family and friends receive as regular email (no reply)