

Alachua ARES/NFARC/NF4AC Clubs

MINUTES

April 14, 2021

Meeting held via ZOOM, instead of in person at the American Red Cross, Gainesville Red Cross, 6th Ave NW and 16th St

Attendance: 26

Gordon Gibby
Stewart Reisner
Leland Gallup
Alvin Osmena
Dean Covey
Reid Tillery
Craig Fugate
Vann Chesney
John KJ4YPZ
Brett Wallace
Emily Wallace
Mike kd4inh
David Huckstep
Susan Halbert
Vann Chesney
Earl McDow
Tom Gause
Jeff Capehart
Mike WB2FKO
Wendell Wright
Rosemary Jones
Amy KO4IDO
Earl KI4OXD
Judy K4DF
Jim Bledsoe
Michael Jaffee

Introductions. From 1830 until 1859 when the meeting commenced.

- 1. UPDATES ON CREDENTIALLED VOLUNTEERS AND PATHWAY FOR NEW VOLUNTEERS (RACES).** Jeff Capehart said that there may be another round of badging mid May. Reid Tillery said that he'd like to be badged, and KX4Z said that Craig Fugate is also interested. W4UFL laid out what "badging" is and what it provides – access and permission to volunteer with the County's shelters. Badging is vetting so that requirements are met for working with, for example, children, the disabled, etc. Badged volunteers for the county also enjoy protection under the FL Volunteer Statutes. Reid asked whether Alachua residence required: probably not. Our EOC described the badging training requirements. First is EC-001

which is free and now on line. Dialog on the ICS courses. Link to requirements placed in Zoom chat box.

2. **APPROVAL OF MARCH 2021 MINUTES.** March 2021 minutes approved.
3. **INTEGRATED PREPAREDNESS PLANNING WORKSHOP APR 28** Our EOC contact, Mr. Dalton Herding, asked KX4Z whether we had an Integrated Preparedness Plan; he said no, which prompted KX4Z to look in to IPP...he then showed the IPP cycle on screen for this meeting. He also showed the URL for HSEEP Doctrine, Chapter 2. Mr. Herding wanted us to push out our overall training plans and objectives for the next three years. HSEEP has two IP cycles; one is the IP preparedness cycle, and then the HSEEP cycle is embedded in the IP cycle. Craig Fugate said it's basically about what kind of capabilities you need for what environment, and how you get there. Training in cycles to get you pointed to your objectives, which change over time. What do we need to train to get what capabilities, and what exercises we need to accomplish the training goals. The exercises should “break” the system so we see where we can improve. Plan, train, and exercise so we get towards our objectives. Determine: threats and hazards; areas for improvement and capabilities; review external sources and requirements; identify priorities and strategies to accomplish; prioritize and schedule future preparedness; develop integrated preparedness plan. Craig pointed out that ham radio proves its worth when things do NOT go right; exercises such as WhirlWind Boom are relevant and important because they illustrate how to work with agencies such as county emergency managers. Planning for when things break is not natural and need to be pushed...our commercial comms have a single point of failure: the IP address. Cyber attack against the Internet as has happened in Georgia and the Ukraine. Those events show that these threats are very real. This world is one where ham radio is valuable – but adding Internet connected systems make it difficult to avoid these consequences. Infrastructure-independent is very important to push. Susan Halbert also added input on long range planning; for an EMCOMM group we should look at things that are likely, but also things that are unlikely but MIGHT happen and then plan accordingly, rather than a shotgun approach. Strategic planning is key. Two weeks from now KX4Z will host a zoom workshop to sketch out a strategic plan for the next three years. He gave the date and the URL, which will also be posted on the NFARC website.
4. **WHIRLWIND BOOM! 2021 REVIEW OF FINDINGS/AAR AND IP DISCUSSION.** KX4Z was way beyond span of control: 13 states and 85 individuals. Difficult to get ECs to write emergency plans. Very frustrating. AARs? Only got AAR from Madison, Volusia, FBDR, but not from Alachua...asked if any missed. Huge growth in groups working together. County EMs jumped in from several counties, as they saw this was great for training. Flagler used GMRS, some used SHARES, some used business bands. State was involved and our state rep learned a great deal. Section Net Managers learned a great deal by stepping up to the plate. Sandy Allison stepped up and did great things as the NCS for the Command Net. FBDR learned much! Mikey Baker, our ARRL Div Director, sent an email to 10k addressees commending KX4Z, W4UFL, and the team. The exercise illustrated a number of issues with our Section and section officials, and issues were worked between local groups and their Emergency Managers. KX4Z listed our Alachua County badged volunteer participants, and listed other badged volunteers who did NOT participate in WhirlWind Boom.
5. **GARS RADIO PROGRAMMING EVENT** Vann, AC4QS, talked about a GARS radio programming session aimed primarily at new hams. Will be at Waldo City Square. Will offer to program new Baofengs, for example. From 1200-1400 on the 17th (date possible recorded

incorrectly). Place date and location put on the Zoom chat screen. Jim Carr plans on being there, and he will program DMR radios. Asked for volunteers to monitor the .82 repeater to engage folks who as new hams are trying out their newly programmed rigs.

6. **NFARC AND GARS SWAP FEST** April 24th. Tom Gause has done a great job planning for this. Gordon showed a draft document for planning the event. This generated a great deal of discussion, the gist being that the event has become a “tiger by the tail,” and that the possible participants may far exceed the capacity of the original venue – KX4Z/AA3YB at Steeplechase Farms, a private gated residential community, to handle. KX4Z solicited volunteers for safety, operations, operations assistant, trash detail volunteers. Earl suggested .55, which is channel 7, as the basic ops frequency. Stewart volunteered as Ops Chief. Rosemary as ops assistant, as did Susan Halbert, both in the “gofer” capacity. David Huckstep volunteered (as ops assistant? Not clear). Gallup volunteered as trash detail, as did Judy Gardner (possible misrecorded). Discussion of food and drink. Vann, AC4QS, said that GARS had allocated \$100 in support of the operation, as well as the possibility of a large “fest” tent. Vann also asked for a volunteer to speak at the next GARS meeting to publicize the event. Gordon Gibby recommended gathering data through a Google Forms campaign. Several suggested a change in venue, and even staging shuttle vans to carry. Cancellation or limiting the event to GARS/NFARC also discussed. Very lengthy and impassioned exchange of views. Bottom line is that venue, limitation of numbers, and data gathering, are all very important in the next day or so if the event is to be a go.
7. **ANTENNA RAISING HELP – REVIEW AND VOTING ON SUBMISSIONS.** Susan mentioned a microwave network for rapid microwave comms with our shelters. Earl agreed to look in to an idea for network local that may involve balloons.
8. **REFURBISHED LOPTOP EXPERIENCE AND REVIEW.** David Huckstep, an avowed computer agnostic, has been dragged kicking and screaming in to the cyber age. So he was interested in acquiring a refurbished computer and bought a Dell computer from RTR computers. Spent \$150 or so dollars. Higher grades cost more. David loves the refurbished computer so much that he bought another one. Recommends two computers on the desk at the same time. First computer he purchased from RTR: the battery died and RTR has fixed. Has succeeded for Winlink, and the solution is outstanding...had many ports on a DVD on the side. RTR is recommended as a source of inexpensive but very capable refurbished computers!
9. **NVIS NET NEWS** Reid Tillery talked his project. 3.970 MHz at 1900 on first and third Fridays of the month. An open ragchew net. We're making friends and learning to use NVIS which would be super for local HF comms in the event of a disaster.
10. **NEWCOMER'S CORNER: BALUN DESIGNS LOSS FINDINGS** 4:1 baluns suitable for OCF antenna. Iron Powder HF toroid with 4:1 can't be recommended. Vann Chesney's type 43 toroid is highly recommended. KX4Z showed losses from 3T design. But now with 2T/14T you have the hands down winner on loss. The 2T/14T is on our website and is the recommended way to go for a home brew balun that can be used for End Fed Half Wave antenna builds.
11. **NEWCOMER'S CORNER: POLARITY PROTECTION ADVANCE AND PROJECT.** KX4Z showed circuit diagram for a circuit board that allows mounting of several MOSFETs. Already built at project. Allows for direct connection to your radio and prevents cross polarity mistakes. Still building circuits; no project kits yet and no date for an event.

12. **RED CROSS EXERCISE LOCAL RESULTS** Local participants included Craig Fugate, Chis Carr, Alvin via HF, Gordon via HF, Earl via HF, and Vann via HF, Reid Tillery via HF. This is a great show of support for the ARC, which alone was responsible for bringing 40 operators to WhirlWind Boom 2021.
13. **FIELD DAY.** Suggest NFARC do another FD at the EOC. KX4Z has spoken to Michelle Clements, the ESF2 director with the Alachua County Emergency Management . Her assistant Christine Borchers called KX4Z today and spoke with Gordon as to who would likely be involved. **W4UFL** suggested a joint publicity announcement that this could be a two site FD with both the EOC and GARS.
14. **ADJOURN** at 8:50pm EDT. Many stayed on afterwards to chat on the live Zoom feed.