

# Alachua ARES/NFARC/NF4AC Clubs

## MINUTES

**February 13, 2024**

Attendance: 14 (at least, and others the Secretary failed to account for). Special NFARC/ARES meeting held on Tuesday night (day before the normal meeting day which is the second Wednesday of the month. This special meeting was held in person at the house of KX4Z and was in reality a Valentine's Day/Mardi Gras "decompress" meeting of the group. The meeting included one agenda item (see below) and the remainder was a social get together with food and beverages. Thanks to the Gibby's for hosting! The announcement for the meeting included a possibility that Dr Gibby would also attempt a ZOOM link for others to virtually gather and feast in a comradely fashion.

Gordon Gibby  
Leland Gallup  
Susan Halbert  
David Huckstep  
Eric Pleace  
Mike Hasselbeck  
Jeff Capehart  
Susan Capehart  
Rosemary Jones  
Earl McDow  
Wendell Wright  
Alvin (don't recall surname)  
Manish Sahni  
Cyd Hayes  
(and many spouses and significant others)

**Introductions.** From 1830 until 1950 when the meeting commenced. The NFARC/NF4AC radio club met for this month in person at the residence of Gordon Gibby and via ZOOM. The reason why the Club(s) get together was so long was that KX4Z and XYL hosted a "Valentines Day Special Meeting" in lieu of the normal meeting. The special meeting was a wonderful pot luck of assorted treats. Nice and welcome change from the normal very busy meetings!

- 1. INTRODUCTION/APPROVAL OF JANUARY 2023 MINUTES.** January 2023 minutes approved.
- 2. WINTER FIELD DAY AAR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION.** Items from Appendix A of the AAR Improvement Plan. Group agreed that Items 1 and 2 were in need of improvement for the following year's Winter Field Day. Item 3...KX4Z has suggested that we have the net manager move to hold more simplex net sessions for the coming year. Group agreed that this necessary if we're to improve our local WFD scores. Thursday night ARES net on simplex? We could do this instead of using only the repeater. The repeater would be manned as a resource net to have people go over to the simplex net. Item 4. Notification techniques included in the net script...we would be told in the script WHY this information is sought. Privacy concerns are a problem

with operators recording their cell phone numbers into any conceivably accessible (hacked) database. Item 5: operators showing limited Winlink skills. EC to do surveys with assisting people to get operating skills. EC says that we have a member management tool that can be used to send SMS messages and map our where people are; can also be used for surveys. Item 6 is about our surveying why we have limited 70cm simplex footprint from the EOC. Could be that we could use tower for next WFD. Item 7: FLDGI operational skill and use training sessions to get more people to use it. Group agreed to this and the earlier items. EC suggested that GARS be invited to participate in this training. Item 8...multipliers on 2.4GHz and how we could use our Ubiquity ham band modified WiFi routers. Good idea. Item 9 ...not sure if there was a consensus on this. Item 10...we would learn how to leverage other contests to get contacts. Item 11...yes. Get a local to do 160m, Item 12. Community volunteer to do 10 and 6m. Not hard to do...just get someone to do it. Item 13...this is all about CW for dummies. EC relayed how GARS failed to properly train how to deconflict/use modes in CW. KX4Z discussed the operational aspects of successful CW operations. W4UFL talked about the lack of “density” for operations at certain hours. Item 14: This is about coaching. People who are teachers need to be gentle, but the “teachees” need to be flexible and willing to learn. This is a team operation and all members of the team need to be good at training and trainable. Item 15 resolves the issue of people who don’t know how to wire their equipment before they deploy. Item 16 touches on improving contest savvy. Understanding contests actually help in emergency communications. Item 17 self explanatory. Item 18 is OBE because of the departure of the operator. Item 19. Obvious. Item 20: Obvious. 21...let us try whether the current end fed can actually work on 160. Item 22. This is an operation and training item that we can fix. 23 same as 22. Mike Hasselbeck says the overall objective is keeping the rate up...so use operators who can do multiple modes...the IC to optimize those people. Item 24. Decrease our WFD operating hours because there just isn’t much activity at certain times/bands (e.g., late at night and the early morning hours). This will alleviate operator needs. 25. Obvious. 26. Obvious. 27. Obvious...we never made contact with GARC, for example. 28. Same. 29. Just figure it out. 30; this is what Susan Halbert mentioned and do. Earl is thinking about replacing the computer because this has happened twice. 32. Obvious. 33. This is an operational requirement that needs to be implemented. 34. Obvious training issue for the EOC station (the one that is always being used). Manish asked whether we could go outside and attempt 6m. Answer is yes, but we didn’t try it. MOTION: accept the improvement plan as stated? Group AGREED and these are adopted.

3. **HAMCATION** notices and Forums. W4UFL reported out information from Hamcation. Our SM had a heart attack but was there. SM election coming up. Scott will run again, and there is someone else running, so there will a vote. Sometime in June or July. Another Statewide comms exercise is contemplated. No date yet but it will be this year. Arc Thames is looking for an assistant SEC. South FL SEC talked about the too-few operators to man shelters in that section. Scott requested more outreach – wear a ham radio shirt, etc. Prepare yourself with 30 second elevator speech. WCF manager discussed TECHCON. KX4Z will do either 2 or 3 presentations. It is February 24 or so. Scott reminded everyone not to self-deploy. EC can activate their OWN counties. Micky Baker, our Division Director, was there and was on a forum. Updated ARRL matters, including a new “associate” membership for under 21 that is free. ARRL is working on new HOA bill. They spent hundreds of thousands on lobbying for this, with apparently no success. Life membership not coming back the way it was. Too expensive for ARRL. FD 2024 amplifiers will be back. Recommend reading the board minutes from ARRL to see what is going on. Lot of people are “tired” of doing everything. 30000 VE s, but they need to mentor and not just do the exams. Only 7% of tech licenses are ARRL

members. 3 of 4 new Techs are no longer active after just a year. Minister is the CEO and said that he is going to do a column on AI and ham radio. Stressed that the ARRL culture has changed to “make it happen,” as opposed to being negative. Too few hams are members of ARRL. 200 000 more could be members. 150000 are members out of more than 780000 licensed operators. DX engineering said new hams always call them and ask “what should I buy.” We need as seasoned amateurs to work on this. Gordon West now an ARRL chief instructor. Teacher’s Institute discussed: you are trained to use equipment that ARRL provides...at a school. Scott and Arc were at the ARES forum. Dayton is the focus of ARRL activity since that is the national convention. Several ARRL members on SAFECOM (Auxcomm relevant). Scott says that all FL SECs are having conference calls. Skywarn classes; Mar 27 in Alachua. Class listing on the JAX NWS site. Hamcation had a Skywarn class and it was great. The EC-1 course is updated as of May 1. It will follow the ARRL Task Book in that it will have three levels. Volunteer hours: nationally, 635,931 volunteer hours worth over 20\$ million- in service last year reported nationally, but this is probably way underreported. KX4Z discussed his view on how there is a disconnect between the Division Managers and the Section Managers, who frequently ignore the dictates of the Board. KX4Z stressed that our local ARES group shows what actually can and is being done to help local counties deal with emergency communications. KX4Z praised the GARS program and their outreach. W4UFL ended with a comparison of Alachua with other reporting counties. 13 NFL counties have no EC s. Half of the active EC s report. We had about 25% of all the counties in NFL as to reporting.

**4. NEW ATTENDEE.** Cyd Hayes introduced herself and seeks mentorship.

**5. ADJOURN** at 2110 EST, 13 February 2024.