

WARC REGULAR MEETING – March 07, 2019

The Meeting was brought to order at 7:01 p.m. with President Kevin (VE1 KEV) in the chair. Nineteen members and guests were present. Introductions were made around the room.

Regrets: Mike (VE1 ZB); Rick (VE9 RWS); Kaye (VE1 YH); Dana (VE1 VOX); Terry (VE1 AC).

Minutes From the Last Meeting:

The minutes from the February 07, 2019 regular meeting were posted on the WARC website and distributed in the Newsletter.

It was moved/seconded by Ron (VE1 BIC)/Jim(VE1 AFH) that the minutes be approved. **Motion carried.**

Business Arising From the Minutes:

Jim (VE1 AFH) presented an update on the Fusion Digital Repeater Project. He noted that there was a lively debate at the February meeting, with pros and cons discussed, after which the members opted to form a committee to determine: A-Do we need it? B-Where to put it? C-Feasibilities: Who would install it? And D-Technicalities: would it interfere with the present MAVCOM system?

It was very clear that in sites “under the umbrella of the Province” we have to keep MAVCOM available in times of emergencies.

At their initial meeting, the committee of six members determined that a Fusion Digital Repeater would enhance and not weaken the present setup. The committee had to decide on the A part: was it a “need” or a “should”. They decided that we should go ahead with this new technology in order for Amateur Radio to survive, and because a lot of members would be interested. As for B: the location had to give very good service in this area, which would make Salem and the John Black Road the preferred sites. The 285 repeater was originally at John Black Road (Aliant) but suffered from intermod. A new repeater on 285 was established at the Provincial site in Salem, but some equipment remained at John Black Road as a backup. As for C: they asked the question: Could we technically put the Fusion repeater in without losing the analog repeater tied into MAVCOM, and was it going to interfere with EMO capability? Would it have good coverage and have Internet service? Jim said Lorne (VE1 BXK) has a good knowledge of the equipment, and Ron (VE1 AIC) who is the

frequency coordinator was familiar with the systems.

The cost factor was also discussed.

At their second meeting, they discussed the location, and determined that the Fusion repeater could be put in at Salem, and have the existing analog repeater at the same time. It was noted that the analog repeater was “not that busy.” If anyone wanted to use analog, there are other repeaters in the area. They determined that we could do both with no interference, and the site would have good coverage for New Brunswick and Pugwash. The Salem site was ideal and had Internet access, and rack space. As for the financial side of things, as Yaesu had a limited time price of \$900.00 (US) and the fact they were comfortable with the information from Lorne and Ron, it was decided to make the purchase now, and then go on to the next step. Jim made the purchase on his VISA and the club would pay him back. Other equipment needed would be a laptop for about \$700.00 (new or refurbished) a web switch to allow the repeater to be turned on or off remotely, and a router for \$70.00 – \$100.00. The next step will be to gain access to the site. If this project goes ahead, it will enhance communications for emergencies and allow us to integrate the MESH network as a backup the regular Internet. We will need another call sign. It was suggested we ask for VE1 AMH and apply through the County. Lorne will do the rack profile, and Seaside Wireless will need to be contacted. We will require another line, but it will use the same IP address. It should have a site manager, as Lorne and Brad are bogged down with other sites and projects. A list of duties for the site manager will be created.

Pravin (VE9 PKV) congratulated the committee.

Mike (VE1 MWJ) said we would be able to use VE1WRC and the new repeater at the same time, as there will be two different frequencies.

New Business:

Nothing to report.

Treasurer's Report:

Jim (VE1 JBL) presented the Treasurer's Report.

It was moved/seconded by Jim (VE1 JBL)/Peter (VE1 SM) that the Treasurer's Report be accepted. **Motion carried.**

Correspondence:

A letter was received by email outlining a change in the operation of some repeaters in another part of the province.

Field Day:

A discussion was held regarding the possibility of holding a “real” Field Day on June 22-23, 2019. It was noted that the last good one was at Beech Hill several years ago. One site suggested was the Tidnish Docks Provincial Park at the end of the ill-fated Chignecto Ship Railway. The Department of Lands and Forests has been contacted and they have no issues with the plan. It will need to be a Club event, with lots of participants, a tent or trailer, generators, antennas, a tower and food.

Mike (VE1 MWJ) said from an EMO perspective, it will be a good chance to test our gear, and some new modes, such as digital radio and the new simplex repeaters. Ron (VE1 BIC) suggested we apply for a “special event” call sign, perhaps VE1 CSR (for “Chignecto Ship Railway”). A committee will be formed to go over the details and see if it is feasible,

Publicity:

Ron (VE1 BIC) said he had aired a PSA about the meeting for the past two days on CFTA 107.9.

Public Service:

Nothing to report.

Newsletter:

Peter (VE1 SM) reported no issues. Ron (VE1 BIC) noted that in the .pdf version he received, the text font changed in some parts from Times New Roman to Arial.

Web page:

Jim (VE1 JBL) has added the SMART Symposium. There have been 130 registrations so far, and the Fleamarket has over 12 vendors.

E.M.O:

Mike (VE1 MWJ) gave an update on the simplex repeater project. He said Lorne (VE1 BXK) still has two more to set up. He said we

can get complacent when everything is going along as it is supposed to. It is when things go sideways that we need to know who to call in for help. What capacity do we have when an emergency happens? What are the roles and responsibilities? Mike said he looks at the Amateur Radio community based on the relationship we have with each other and the County. With that in mind, he presented a cheque for \$500.00 to the WARC from the Municipality of Cumberland. The EMO is attempting to get radios set up at comfort centres, which will be in use during emergencies and power outages. These installations will be in addition to the radios set up in hospitals and fire stations. He said it is important for the comfort centres to look after the health and welfare of citizens, allowing first responders to look after more important issues. There are 23 comfort centres in Cumberland County.

Jerry (VE1 KW) wondered what event would have to happen to make simplex the only mode available. He noted that years ago most Amateurs had a mobile radio (at least 25 watts) in a vehicle with a 5/8 whip antenna. He said this is not as common today.

Jim (VE1 AFH) said you need to know the infrastructure in your area. Bob (VE1 EDP) said it looks like we will be getting more ice storms in the future, and we need a plan for 2 metres.

N.S.A.R.A.:

Brad (VE1 ZX) said the next NSARA meeting will be held at the Halifax Fleamarket.

President's Report:

Nothing to report.

Net:

Ron (VE1 BBB) reported that the morning Wake Up net was going good. Brad (VE1 ZX) said 15 repeaters had been in use that morning.

Repeaters:

Brad (VE1 ZX) reported no major issues. Lorne (VE1 BXK) said the solar repeater in Parrsboro had been off and on recently. The Sand River repeater keeps resetting and requires it to be powered off remotely

Unfinished Business:

Jim (VE1 AFH) gave an update on the Bursaries for 2019. Using a list from the past 5-6 years, some of which had family members of WARC member graduating, he determined that the Bursary this year would go to Advocate. No Bursary was awarded in 2018.

New Business:

Nothing to report.

Hints & Kinks:

Nothing to report.

Sick and Visiting:

It was reported that Rob (VE9 KM) had undergone surgery and was recovering at home.

Technical & Operating Information:

Ron (VE1 BIC) said it would be a good idea to have a used car battery on hand for emergencies. If kept charged, and would be able to run a radio for several hours.

Social:

The March Brunch will be at Patterson's in Sackville on the 16th. In April on the 13th at the Parkview Restaurant in Oxford, and on May 18th at the Harbourview Restaurant in Parrsboro.

The 50-50 (\$32.50) was won by Jim (VE1 AFH) who donated his share to the Repeater fund.

Next Meeting:

Thursday, April 04, 2019, at 7 pm at the Municipality of Cumberland Building in Upper Nappan.

Adjournment: 8:30 pm.

Ron Bickle (VE1 BIC) Secretary