

MEETING OF THE ST. CROIX VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

February 19, 2023

Calais Veterans Hall, Calais, ME

The meeting was called to order by President Roger Holst at 1734 hours.

Present were:

Roger Holst, W1LH, President

Charlie Dix, W0AQ, Vice President

Dick Smith, VE9HX, Vice President

Maurry Mills, W1FWS, Secretary

Anne Carter, KB1RQH

Ken Carter, WA1DXO

Kevin Stanhope, KA1VKQ

Ralph Hicks, KA1FUE

Tim Nelson, KC1ROV

Maurry read the Secretary's Report for the January 2023 meeting; there were no changes and there was a unanimous vote to approve the minutes as read.

The Secretary's Report for the January 2023, and prior meetings is on the club website www.stcroixvalleyamateurradioclub.org

Rick was not present so there was no Treasurers Report; Roger noted that 3 people had paid their dues via the PayPal account.

The next order of business was to vote on accepting two new members to the club: Ralph Hicks, KA1FUE of Eastport and Tim Nelson, KC1ROV, of Pembroke. The Club Bylaws require that an individual apply for membership and that they be voted in as members. There was a unanimous vote to accept Ralph and Tim as members of the club.

Roger reported that he had issues with updating the current web site but that it is up and running with the minutes from 2023. Charlie is continuing to work on the new web site which will have an .org address. People visiting the old (current)

web site will be directed to the new site when it is operational. The new site should be operational in about a month. We hope to have fresh and up to date and changing information on the new site with items such as DX expedition information, and pictures of meetings and club events.

We will need to link or tie together the web page and the club Facebook page. Maurry volunteered to work on the FB page and update it. Roger went over some of the past history of the club web page, which use Concrete 5 as the software.

The next item discussed was the proposed survey to be sent to HAMs in the Calais and St. Stephen area. Charlie will send a list he has put together to Roger. The survey would ask what the interests of the local hams are, what they would like to see the club do, and ideas for club activities they may have. A goal for the club might be to have 20 people attending monthly meetings by the end of the year.

We are an international club and there used to be more participation from HAMs in Canada, including Campobello. It was noted there are 2 new HAMs on Deer Island but it would be difficult for them to attend meetings given ferry schedules. It was suggested that we try having a check in via a local repeater but Roger didn't think it would work and it may be difficult to get an outside antenna on the building.

Roger noted that the K1QA repeater is currently in his shop and he hopes to get an antenna up on a tower next week.

Next on the agenda was a discussion on Field Day and the Annual Ham Fest. Field Day will be on June 24 and 25. We can begin set up after 2PM on Friday, June 23, at the fields next to the Alexander School. Roger suggested we simplify and streamline our operations this year. We typically begin set up on Friday afternoon and complete it Saturday before the 2PM start up time. The event runs 24 hours but the club usually begins shutting down Sunday morning. A highlight of FD is a barbeque dinner at 5PM; spouses and friends are invited to attend. We will need to appoint a Field Day Safety Officer to keep an eye out especially during take down.

The Annual HAM Fest will be on Saturday, September 16 at the Alexander School. Roger has sent the notice to the ARRL, and he also updated the list of club officers. The Alexander Grange will handle the food again this year.

Roger will contact the National Weather Service contacts he has regarding Weather Spotter Training.

Roger purchased a few items from ARRL that he would like to auction off over time, maybe concluding the bidding or drawing at the September Ham Fest. The funds would go into the ARRL's Spectrum Defense Fund.

The ARRL sent each club a book on getting started in Ham Radio. Tim was given the book to review and will return it to the club at some point for future use by new hams or possibly to be given to a local library.

It was noted that there is a lot of knowledge in the club and there should be a way to share and help each other with problems, maybe a way to post questions on the new web page or via Facebook.

Ralph had a question about the various logging programs and how they interact with each other to get QSL cards or QSO confirmations. Charlie agreed to put together a presentation for our next meeting.

There was a question about doing presentations in the schools but it was suggested that we put on informational meetings on Ham Radio a few times a year and advertise as broadly as we can. We could have 3 or 4 club members (or other HAMs) talk about the various aspects of the hobby and how to get involved and get licensed.

It was also suggested that we explore having a weekly or monthly column about ham radio in some of the local papers (Calais Advertiser, Quoddy Tides, St. Croix Currier), just like the nature and sky gazing articles that are currently in some of the papers. Anne Carter volunteered to put something together soon.

There was some discussion about RF interference; Maine has a group of 3 troubleshooters; they received a grant from ARRL and purchased an Icom 705 to aid in determining sources of interference. In about 30% of the cases the cause is power lines.

It was noted that power lines will or are being run along parts of Route 9 to support 3 new cell towers. When the projects are complete there should only be about 3 miles of Rt. 9 that don't have commercial power.

The meeting was adjourned at 1900 hours.

Respectfully submitted,
Maury Mills, Secretary