

Door County Amateur Radio Club

Meeting Minutes for November 3, 2020

The November monthly meeting of the DCARC met on November 3, 2020 at 7pm CST via Zoom conferencing.

The meeting was called to order by Larry, W9WTZ (president) at 7:05pm. Members attending were W9WTZ, W9OBB, K9HAH, KA9WAR, N9EDV, KC9GBX, KC9KMA, KB9MZC, K9IY, KA9TQC, KD9KPU and KB9ZND.

Good Morning Net Frequency Change

The focus of this month's meeting was to discuss and determine which repeater frequency will host the Good Morning Net going forward. Even though the GMN is separate from the club, the club maintains the repeater equipment it is held on so it was felt it was appropriate to host the discussion in this venue, besides on the net itself. There have been occasional problems with the signal and transmissions on the 147.21 frequency. These seem to have an association with wind speed and direction. Antenna orientation and problems with the repeater equipment on the WDOR tower are felt to be contributing factors. As the proposed tower climb to address the status of that repeater will most likely not occur before March or April 2021, it has been proposed that the GMN be held on the Egg Harbor @ Sunnyslope 146.730 repeater as that equipment is more robust and transmits at greater power (40 watt with 10 watt output on the .210 VS 100 watt with 68 watt output on the .730 repeater). A successful test net was held on October 20th with only one operator experiencing difficulty (which will be addressed with hams helping hams!). Due to the positive response to that test, the motion was made and passed that starting on Monday, November 16th 2020, the GMN will meet on the 146.730 frequency going forward.

Announcements on the net, notices on social media and emails will be utilized to make people aware of and remind them of the change.

The question arose as to the whether this will be a permanent or temporary change. The concern is that if any needed repairs to the WDOR/Sturgeon Bay site are costly, would it be worthwhile to pursue that avenue if the EH @ SS site is a viable alternative and acceptable to net participants. A determination would be addressed in the future after the tower climb and inspection occurs. To be absolutely clear, the WDOR/SB 147.21 repeater will continue to be operational and maintained. It is an asset to the club and provides another option for transmitting. It is always desirable to have multiple options available for use.

146.730 Site Name

This site will be now be referred to as *Egg Harbor @ Sunnyslope*. As repeaters are listed in directories by the zip code they are located in, this site has an Egg Harbor zip code and is so designated. However, there is more than one radio tower in this zip code, so it is also referred to as Sunnyslope (off of Sunnyslope Rd.) to differentiate further. This new nomenclature has now been incorporated on official listings. Hopefully this will help to clear the confusion in how different people refer to it.

Repeater Transmission Timers

The protocol in the U.S. is for repeaters to have a 3 minute transmission limit. After 3 minutes, the repeater will automatically pause and the repeater timer will reset. This will happen even if you are still speaking and so you will be cut off at that point. If you do not wait for the repeater to reset before

beginning your transmission, you do not get your full 3 minutes, only what time remains on the previous transmission. Pausing also prevents the beginning of your transmission from being cut off. When the net switches over to the 146.730 frequency this 3 minute limit will still apply. Since this repeater uses a different system than the 147.210, it will be important to allow time for the timer to reset as it may take a moment or two longer to do than on the other. This is especially important on Echolink for if the time limit is exceeded, all Echolink participants are knocked off and have to go back and re-enter the system. Also be aware that the identifier on this repeater is different (voice VS code) and may or may not be in the background of transmissions as it is on the .21 although these settings may change in the future.

It may not seem like a significant thing, but it really is important to be aware of the 3 minute limit and pausing to allow the repeater to reset. There is an actual “guardian angel” (you know who she is!) on the GMN who keeps an eye on transmission times. However, this guardian angel has needed to manually reset the repeater at least 2 to 3 times a day, every day. What you have to contribute to the morning’s conversation is important and valued, so if you do need more than 3 minutes, remember to pause to allow the repeater to reset and then continue on with your thoughts. So please keep this in mind to keep the net flowing smoothly. It really is good amateur radio practice.

This opened up discussion on how to keep track of 3 minutes. Some radios have built in timers, but others need to use different manual timers, e.g. cell phones or egg timers (ask OBB about his Arduino timer). Sadly, there is not a timer built into the Echolink software so awareness is up to the user.

Calling all “Elmers”

Once again, kudos are due to Al (EDV) in organizing the group get together to discuss Raspberry PI. This is your club and if there is any topic that you feel interested in exploring, there are others out there interested also. So “own it” and get a group together to learn and expand with like minded hams. Some topics of interest mentioned are:

- Node Analyzers
- Packets/Winlink
- FT8 (yes, we want you, Arde!)

Meeting Minutes

Currently, there is a page on the *W9DOR.org* website for the president’s newsletter. This is going to be changed to the current month’s meeting minutes.

Christmas

With no in-person gatherings safe for the foreseeable future, ideas to acknowledge the holidays were tossed around. A Zoom gathering, a member holiday photo collage were ideas mentioned.

What are your suggestions?

This meeting adjourned at 7:38pm CST
Next meeting to be held on December 2, 2020
These minutes respectfully submitted by
Paula R. KB9ZND, Treasurer