

Charlottetown Amateur Radio Club

President

Bill McMaster VY2WM

Secretary

Vice-President

Treasurer

Julia Ashworth VY2JA

Joel MacNeill VY2KW

Charles Easter VY2CE

Minutes of April 2, 2024 meeting

Bill VY2WM called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

Members present were:

Bill McMaster VY2WM

Brent Taylor VY2HF

Bruce Maclean VY2BM

Ricardo Angel VY2AN

Fraser Ashworth VY2FA

Bill Glydon VY2LI

Ron MacKay VE1AIC

Darrell MacArthur VY2OM

Michael Morrison VY2CO

Andrew Jorgensen VY2HZ

Aaron Shelvey VY2DIY

Joel MacNeill VY2KW

Richard Burke VY2RB

Tyler MacNeill VY2TM

Charles Easter VY2CE

Julia Ashworth VY2JA

Brian Gorgeatt VY2BG

Mike McNeill VY2MG

Selina MacArthur VY2OL

William Caw VY2CAW

Elizabeth Jorgensen VY2KV

Doug Silliker VY2DS

Sick and Silent Keys:

None noted. Joel VY2KW asked if anyone had heard from Sterling VY2SEC. Bill VY2WM replied that he had been on the 80m net a few weeks ago.

Announcements:

None noted.

Minutes of March 5, 2024 meeting:

Bill VY2WM advised that since the minutes for the last members' meeting had been emailed to all members there was no need for the secretary to read them. Moved by Bill VY2LI, seconded by Richard VY2RB to approve the minutes as circulated. All approved, motion carried.

Business arising from the minutes:

Ordering of COAX study guides:

Bill VY2WM reminded the club that at the last meeting we had approved the purchase of six COAX study guides at \$50 each. When he came to order three study guides, he discovered that the price had increased to \$65 each. Bill made the executive decision to go ahead with the ordering, as approval had been given for $6 \times \$50 = \300 and the actual total cost would only be $3 \times \$65 = \195 . Furthermore, the executive decided to charge the students only the \$50 per book as advertised. The \$50 course fee would be sufficient to cover the \$15 difference.

Going forward, it was decided to check the price of the books prior to advertising the next course. Bill would also check out other stores like Radioworld to see if they might sell the books for less. Students would be charged the actual cost of the books.

Antenna at Canadian Red Cross building:

Bill VY2WM reported that Max from the Red Cross had given Brent VY2HF a tour of the facilities just prior to the start of the course. Brent told the club that Max had done quite a bit of tidying up, including in the radio room. He was surprised to find a 900 MHz ground plane antenna installed. Brent couldn't identify exactly what it was for and Max didn't know anything about it. Brent said he couldn't see any cables, but maybe it could help us help them set up their radio room.

President Report:

Bill VY2WM reported that last Thursday, March 28th, he had attended the first quarterly PEI EMO meeting. All the NGOs (non-government organizations) in attendance including Bill gave updates. Bill told them about our radio courses.

With Emergency Preparedness Week coming up in May (5th - 11th), the EMO asked if any of the NGOs wanted to be involved this year. Bill thinks this might be a very good idea for us to demonstrate the usefulness of WINLINK. The club might be able to set up a WINLINK client,

using Ron VE1AIC's gateway. Bill VY2WM and Brent VY2HF will also be giving a course on WINLINK at SMART24.

Bill continued his report by telling the club that there would be emergency activities by the coastguards taking place later this year in October. Again, the EMO has asked for volunteers to be involved. It sounds like they'll be looking for volunteers to act as injured persons. Bill suggested waiting for more information before making a decision on whether the club could contribute anything. In any case, any member can be involved on an individual basis. More information to follow. The next EMO quarterly meeting will be held in June.

Bill also reported that he was chatting to someone from St. John Ambulance who told him that they were looking for a storage location for some of their equipment. Bill mentioned that we were currently looking for a clubhouse and suggested that we might want to find a joint location. The person from St. John Ambulance was very interested in the idea.

Treasurer Report:

Charles VY2CE reported income from membership so far of \$670.00 from 27 members and that there were three members who had prepaid for 2024 back in 2023. There are also two life members, giving a total paid membership of 32. Donations received so far total \$30.

Charles continued his report saying that we had received \$450.00 in tuition fees for the spring course as well as \$350.00 from the sale of seven COAX study guide books. This gives us a total income of \$1,500.00 up to the end of March.

Bank expenses up to the end of February were \$12.75 and office expenses came to \$132.06, giving a total of \$144.81 for expenses. Charles added that the invoice for the most recent purchase of three COAX study guides was not included in the total.

The RBC bank balance of our main account at the end of March was \$5,277. Our dormant account contained just under \$100. Cash in Hand at the end of March was around \$40.

Moved by Charles VY2CE, seconded by Brian VY2BG that the financial report be approved. All in favour, motion carried.

Committee Reports:

Training/Education:

Spring 2024 Basic Licensing Course:

Brent VY2HF reported that the spring basic licensing course was going well with 10-11 regular attendees. He said that the addition of two extra teachers - Ricardo VY2AN and Aaron VY2EK - as well as a number of additional helpers (Charles VY2CE, Mike VY2MG, Tracey VY2TAZ, Fraser VY2FA, and Julia VY2JA) had really made things a lot easier.

Brent told the club that this cohort was at a whole other level with one of them being a NAV Canada engineer and another a university professor.

Brent also announced the addition of a brand new ham on the island: Patrick Collicutt VY2PC from Cape Wolfe. Patrick wrote his exam on Saturday last week and within 24 hours had made 24 contacts including one in Australia!

Brent already has four people interested in a potential fall course.

Potential Summerside Course:

Bill VY2WM told the club that a lady from near Summerside had asked if we would consider holding an in-person course over there. She owns a cafe and said we could use her place for classes.

Doug VY2DS liked the idea of holding a course in the Summerside area and thought that he might be able to find 10-12 people interested in attending. However, he himself and his vice president John VE1CM don't think that they could actually teach the course.

Options discussed included Doug driving the students to the classes in Charlottetown or having some of our members who live closer to Summerside help teach the course there.

Ricardo VY2AN suggested teaching via live video, so that the students would be in Summerside, but the teacher could remain in Charlottetown. The general consensus was that it would be too difficult for us to provide all the teachers who would have to travel to and from Summerside over several weeks.

It was decided that Bill VY2WM would take our course material over to the next meeting of the Summerside club and show them how easy teaching actually would be. Perhaps they could teach the course themselves after all with us providing the material and support.

Repeater Update:

Ron VE1AIC reported that not much had been happening during the winter.

Work on the Belfast repeater had to stop in the fall as it was too difficult to get to. The portable repeater in Rick VY2WTF's garage is doing well. Ron is planning on going out there in May.

The Glen Valley repeater is also doing well, but is not perfect as Ron had to fix up the building in the time he had planned on working on the repeater.

The Montague repeater is also working. Ron doesn't currently have a contact in the Fire Department who owns the site. The repeater is located in an attic which gets very hot in the summer.

Ron said that he had two extra repeaters packaged up and ready to go. One for emergencies and one for down east. He is still looking for a suitable site around the Morrell area. Any further east would be too far to drive to regularly.

Ron said he had cables and connectors to test his WINLINK setup, as WINLINK is great for off-grid use during emergencies.

New Club Station Location Committee Update:

Bill VY2LI reported that they were still unsure of the size requirement for the club station. Bill VY2WM suggested that the club station itself needed to have two operating positions and sufficient space for two to three hams at the same time. If possible, it would be nice to have a larger room adjacent to it about the size of our current meeting room where we could hold our monthly club meetings. Ideally, we would like 24 hour access to the station. Somebody suggested that it might be good to get in with an emergency organization.

Bill VY2WM read out a letter that Michael VY2CO had sent to the mayor of Stratford. No reply so far. Michael also said that he owned a radio that he couldn't use in his current residence and that the club could use once we had a station.

Field Day Committee Update:

Ricardo VY2AN reported that Rick VY2WTF had sent a letter to the group that organizes the area they're interested in in Pinette. There is Pinette Raceway, but there is also Pinette Provincial Park. Other areas of interest are Wood Island and Prim Point. So far they have not had any response. Ricardo said he would wait for another month before considering other locations.

Bill VY2LI asked Michael VY2CO to inquire about the possibility of using Camp Gencheff. Michael said he would ask.

Correspondence:

None.

New/Ongoing Business:

Total Solar Eclipse:

Bill VY2WM said that most people seem to be going up west on April 8th. There is no official club activity planned for the day.

SMART24 Symposium:

Bill VY2WM thinks that SMART24 is fully booked up, so unfortunately anyone who hasn't registered yet won't be able to attend this year.

Halifax Flea Market:

Ron told the club that the Halifax Amateur Radio Club was holding their flea market on May 25th this year.

CARC Flea Market:

Ricardo VY2AN asked if we would be having another flea market this year. Bill VY2WM asked members to raise their hands if they would be interested in holding another one this year. The majority voted in favour of a flea market. If we wanted to have it in July, we would have to start planning soon.

RCAF Centennial:

Doug VY2DS reminded the club that the month of April was the Royal Canadian Air Force 100 year anniversary. In honour of this celebration, the Western Prince Edward Island Amateur Radio Club (VY2WPE) is sponsoring the special callsign VY2RCAF for the entire month of April. Doug said that they had made 160 contacts so far. He asked us to keep our ears open for them on the airways.

Doug continued explaining that Bob VY2NX had set up a Facebook group where they time-share the VY2RCAF call sign. Anyone who would like to use the VY2RCAF call sign, please contact Bob.

Julia VY2JA will send an email to the membership with this information.

“Helping Hands”:

Bill VY2LI asked if the club would be interested in setting up a committee to help older hams remain on the air or return to the air.

Bill VY2WM explained that older hams often are no longer physically able to maintain their stations. In which case, the idea is that a younger ham would help them.

Other situations may involve an older ham who can no longer have a station where they live. In this case, a remote station set-up may be a possibility, provided the ham operator has an advanced licence.

It was decided that Julia VY2JA would email the membership asking for younger hams who would like to be involved. Bill VY2WM would ask Micah VY2MIC to set up a special section on the club website where hams who need help can make contact with Julia and Bill. They will then coordinate the help.

Brent VY2HF suggested using the name “Helping Hands”, which is what the Fredericton Club calls their help-a-fellow-ham program.

Club Banner:

Ricardo VY2AN asked if the club would approve him ordering two or three club banners that people could use during POTA activations to advertise the club. He thought they would be around \$60 each.

It was decided that Ricardo would bring ideas for their design and their exact cost to the next meeting so that the club could take a vote.

Information Exchange:

Due to it being already quite late, it was decided to postpone Bill VY2WM's talk on how to save high custom fees until next time.

Bill VY2WM adjourned the meeting at 9:05 PM.

Julia Ashworth
Secretary

Bill McMaster
President