

Victoria Amateur Radio Club
General Meeting
April 15, 2021

Opening

The regular meeting of the Victoria Amateur Radio Club (VARC) was called to order at 7:10 PM on April 15, 2021.

Opening Comments by the President – Brenson, KF5VZ

Brenson, KF5VZ opened the meeting with the announcement that the VARC has been recognized as a Special Services Club. The requirements to achieve Special Services Club status is the club must have at least ten qualified events/activities during the calendar year. Events that qualify are, monthly club meetings, nets, VE sessions, boot camps, and trainings. Public sponsored events such as TWS, Kiwanis Club Bike Ride, Family Expo, and Field Day also qualify. We can maintain the Special Services Club status by continuing to do the events and services that we normally do.

Dave, NV5C asked if there was anything to be gained by being recognized as a special services club. Bob explained that it puts the club in a leadership role that demonstrates that we are active, growing, and provide services to the community and other clubs. Gary commented that it helps our marketing as a 501c to be recognized by the ARRL as a special services organization. Brenson stated that it might also help us get grants. It was re-iterated that qualifying and maintaining Special Services Club status doesn't require a lot of additional efforts. The activities that we were already doing qualified us for the status.

Opening Comments by the Vice President – Gary Garnett, WT0B

A concern was raised by a member that there is a perception that VARC is primarily a 2 meter club, and HAMs with other amateur radio interests may not have opportunities to participate in them with the club. That is not the intent, so **Gary, WT0B** began making modifications to the club mission statement. He presented the updated mission statement and the strategies that have been listed as basic activities and goals for the club that support the Special Services Club status and the broad area of interests of the club membership. The revised mission statement and strategies are posted on the VARC website.

Bob, KI5PG made a motion that we adopt the mission statement and strategies, and Brian seconded.

There was some discussion about it.

A vote was taken and the motion was unanimously passed.

Gary, WT0B presented changes to the membership application that have been made that support the mission statement changes.

Gary, WT0B presented the VARC website and mentioned some recent updates and key information pages. such as the repeater page updates.

Brenson, KF5VZ asked if we had a quorum.

A quorum was verified.

The February and March minutes were presented.

Bob, KI5PG made a motion to accept the February and March meeting minutes, it was seconded by **Harvey, WB5MCT**. The motion to approve the minutes passed unanimously.

Brenson, KF5VZ called for the Treasurer Report

Steven presented the report.

Harvey, WB5MCT moved to approve the treasurer report as presented, **Bob, KI5PG** seconded the motion. The motion to accept the treasurers report passed unanimously.

Brenson, KF5VZ called for the public relations report from **Bob, KI5PG**

Bob, KI5PG commented that it seems that we are finally coming out of the Covid restrictions so events are more likely in the coming months. We have two major events coming up in June. They are the Texas Water Safari and Field Day.

There was quite a bit of discussion about field day and several different possible ideas for activities. Some of the ideas discussed as possibilities to run side by side with normal field day activities are:

Training seminars on Netlogger or *All Star, boot camp, a rusty Ham boot camp, antenna construction, how repeaters are made, DMR, learning how to set up a station in emergencies, etc.

Gavin, KI5LKN mentioned being interested in antenna options that will improve handheld radio performance when out camping or in remote areas.

Dave, NV5C explained that field day is a contest, and that some clubs compete. We're just coming out of a deep dive sunspot cycle and conditions are expected to be better than they have been in several years. He explained that there will be lots of people working HF on that day.

Brenson, KF5VZ stated that he would like us to turn in logs this year.

Bob, KI5PG volunteered to head-up publicity and public relations and plan some training events or seminars.

Brenson, KF5VZ asked **Dave, NV5C** if a tower might be available? He also asked if the Coletto Creek group might be interested in joining us. Dave thought they might be interested and would like to have an invite.

Brenson, KF5VZ recapped, food is desired, a show of hands for who would plan to participate and there was interest from those in the meeting. Comments, suggestions, and volunteers are welcome and encouraged.

Dave, NV5C mentioned bringing in his travel trailer, the club trailer, Harvey thought he might bring his RV.

Brenson, KF5VZ called for committee reports

Harvey, WB5MCT – Repeater report

There has been some damage on the 145.190, it will require some testing to find out what is damaged. He suspects damage that will require a climb.

On the 145.130 we are trying a new location and would like to get reports on how it's working. He is planning some troubleshooting.

On the 443.8 repeater, he is closing in on building a replacement. It has been on the air for about 25 years of uninterrupted service. He has a new, better duplexer and a power amp ready for testing.

We have a construction permit for a new UHF repeater that will probably go at the sheriff's office. The antenna system has tested good however there is some interference from one of the vhf transmitter that is interfering with our UHF repeater. The results from the test repeater were very promising.

Gary, WT0B – encouraged folks to try the 145.130 repeater and provide feedback on its performance.

Texas Water Safari event. Starts at 9am on Saturday until 2pm on Wednesday. Ham operators keep track of entries. We use a combination of reporting positions by voice over repeaters as well as entering data into a Google spreadsheet using tablets and phones. We are there to provide help & assistance in the event if emergencies occur. He needs coverage for three different checkpoints. June 12th thru the 16th.

Brenson, KF5VZ called for New Business

Officers will review the mission statement and club activities.

Brenson, KF5VZ got an email from ARRL regarding RF exposure rules that go into effect on May 3rd of this year. ARRL will have support available to assist in the calculations. There are links on the VARC webpage to describe the requirements and assist in determining the safe operation around transmitting antennas.

Brenson, KF5VZ called for Old Business

Erin, KI5LKN discussed the Sunday evening Book Club Net. It meets at 6:30pm on the 145.190 repeater. There have been two nets so far with good participation. Topics have been centered around gardening this month. The topic being considered for the month of May is to discuss the Netlogger software. Another idea for the month of May being considered is emergency preparations, how to effectively prepare for operating during and after a storm under the various conditions that may be present. Net sessions on ARES and RACES are anticipated during the month as well.

Steven has the registration receipt for the club trailer in the amount of \$5, he needs club motion in order to re-imburse the \$5 for that expense. **Bob KI5PG** made the motion, **Harvey WB5MCT** seconded and the motion passed.

Bob, KI5PG had antennas and connectors available for members if needed.

Harvey WB5MCT made a motion to adjourn the meeting, **Bob, KI5PG** seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:26pm.

Members

Members, Proxies

Guests

KF5VZ Brenson	KI5PG Bob	KE5TER Steve	W0VAB Bob Garnett
WB5MCT Harvey	KI5ORT Daniel	KI5GAP Darrell	
AE7JS Jim	KI5LKM Erin	W5WNP Bill	
NV5C Dave	KI5LKN Gavin		
KG5AUZ Bryan			

KI5w