

**Gold Coast Amateur Radio Association
Minutes of Board Meeting on January 14, 2024**

The regular board meeting of the Gold Coast Amateur Radio Association was held on Zoom and was called to order by President Melanie Fernandez at 2:42 pm on January 14, 2024.

PRESENT: President Melanie Fernandez (KJ4VCT), Vice President Ben Echavarria (N7BBE), Secretary Ricki Witte (KJ4FSJ), Treasurer Dirk Basting (N4AN), Repeater Trustee Ricky Eaton (KD4HGR), Public Information Officer Tom Savoca (K9TJS), and Director at Large Joe McGee (NX4T).

MINUTES: Draft minutes of the last board meeting on November 26, 2023, had been posted online and were approved as submitted.

EVENTS: Melanie Fernandez suggested a club picnic on March 2nd. Ben Echavarria moved to hold the picnic, and the motion passed. Other clubs will be invited. Melanie will schedule the picnic with the Broward County Parks Department.

It was agreed that the club would work with one or more other clubs for a joint event in April, such as transmitting from one of the county parks, which the Palmetto Club has been doing. Ricky Eaton will contact the Palmetto Club.

SPEAKERS: Ben will seek speakers for the general meetings based on subjects in which members have expressed an interest in their membership applications. Dirk Basting will contact an individual he knows of to speak about DMR and a radio that finds DMR frequencies. Melanie will contact previous speaker Bob Heil regarding his availability. Robert Molleda of NOAA is scheduled to speak in both February and March but on different subjects.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Dirk presented the Treasurer's Report which showed:

Beginning balance (November 26, 2023)	\$8,820.38
Expenses	(520.47)
Income	<u>322.58</u>
Ending balance (January 14, 2024)	\$8,622.49

Dirk also presented an annual report and a proposed budget, which had been provided to board members by email before the meeting. The budget is based on the income and expenditures over the past two years. The pattern shows most income is from dues and donations, and that events tend to cost more than the income they produce. The Annual Report for 2024 has been filed with the Florida Division of Corporations, and a federal income tax return for 2023 has been filed with the Internal Revenue Service.

It was suggested that debit cards be given to all officers, but after discussion it was agreed to continue the present practice of providing a debit card only to the president and treasurer.

REPEATER TRUSTEE'S REPORT: Ricky Eaton reported that the repeaters are all working. There is some noise on 146.61, which is intermittent and therefore difficult to diagnose. All Star is in progress, and work on that should be completed this year. The 440 HF repeater works well but is little used. Melanie and Joe had difficulties accessing the repeater, and Ricky Eaton explained that it sometimes takes more than one attempt to get in.

Melanie had asked Alan Lislser, NT4AL, to join the group that works with Ricky Eaton to keep the repeaters and related equipment functioning, due to his technical knowledge. Ricky said they have not been able to coordinate a time to work together but he will make another contact.

A portable air conditioner has been offered to the club for use in the repeater room at John Knox Village to control the heat in the room where the equipment is. Permission from John Knox Village to install it is necessary and has been requested. Ricky Eaton will check again with the persons in charge.

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER'S REPORT: Tom Savoca has added features to the website and is working with Carol Sjurson, KJ4AWB, on using social media for publicity and member contacts.

WINTER FIELD DAY: Joe McGee, with assistance from others, sent out hundreds of postcard invitations to Winter Field Day and reported receiving favorable feedback. In addition to providing a form on the website to schedule time on the air, Joe is trying to arrange other activities to keep visitors interested and engaged. Half Moon, AJ4JG, will bring and demonstrate an antenna he made. The tactical call sign for the event will be W4BUG. Joe would like to obtain the retired call sign "W4FTL," now in the custody of David Crane, K4RU. Melanie will bring the banners to Winter Field Day.

Ben said he had a problem with the registration form in that a mistake could not be erased and corrected. Tom said the problem was in the software which, however, is free.

There was a discussion about the 146.91 repeater located on the 110 Tower across from the Courthouse. It belongs to the Broward Amateur Radio Club, Inc., which has ceased to function. Section Manager Mickey Baker, N4MB, is the Trustee, and Al Flapan, AF4FA, is the only other person with access to the repeater. Ricky Eaton will call Mickey to find out if the repeater could be made available to GCARA.

Melanie asked if anyone would be willing to write a blog for the website. Tom said he can produce articles by using AI.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:36 pm.

Ricki Witte, Secretary