

# Palmetto Amateur Radio Club

## Board Meeting Notes

February 22, 2026

**Attending Board Members:** David Pomerantz (President), Nemury Valladares (Vice President), Jim Schwantes (Treasurer) and Mike Sam (Repeater Trustee)

**Absent:** Roberto Fernandez (Director)

### Meeting convened at 15:15

Review of last month's minutes were reviewed and approved by all club officers and posted on the website in January for member review.

### Topics discussed and summary of conversation:

Meshtastic is a popular technology as evidenced at Hamcation earlier this month. The Board decided to adopt this trend and offer education and guidance to our membership. Considering the initial learning curve as well as purchase options available, the Board will create a standard list of components required to build a basic unit. It was presented that we could build these units for sale and offer them to members as a club fundraiser. This topic will be explored further during the coming weeks.

GMRS has proven to draw large membership in the South Dade area and our members have already expressed interest in learning more about this form of communications. This involves not only license requirements and process but also equipment purchase options. The Board decided to continue education and guidance for our membership to bring in higher numbers of potential ham radio operators. Nemury stated that a very high percentage of GMRS users went on to become licensed and involved in amateur radio technologies.

Issues with growth as well as retention of membership was discussed and various ideas were presented. All agreed that continuing with our monthly PARC Hopper events was going to continue to be a successful method. However, we need to encourage more people to attend by providing education, radio assistance and other useful content at these gatherings. This past event at Tree Tops Park, Mike Sam presented the topic of building your own battery box for portable operations. We will continue to put together this kind of content moving forward. We also decided that documentation along with pictures and video should be placed on the website for member access.

The current status of the repeater site was discussed. With just the one VHF repeater, it was determined to not invest any money in repairing the UHF repeater that was damaged several months ago until there was more daily activity from the community. We discussed possibly adding internet access for allowing other protocols such as Zello, Allstar and others. However,

the expense of doing so would be prohibitive at this time. We did discuss adding a Meshtastic Solar powered node in the future to provide coverage to the central Broward area. Mike and Nemury will test coverage limits on their next visit to the repeater site in March.

Mike Sam covered the process that will be involved in removing the older mono-pole antenna. Nemury will be assisting in the process during the site visit scheduled for March 3rd, 2026.

There was a discussion regarding group fundraising that covered topics including the production of items for sale to the members. The ideas of building custom Meshtastic nodes, battery boxes and other items tailored for our group were raised and discussed. More research is required before we can make a final decision. Both Mike and Nemury will work on a bill of material to present to the board for future consideration. Jim will look into 3d printing of custom cases for the Meshtastic devices.

Jim raised the topic of [groups.io](https://groups.io) and how it creates a platform separate from the website. He will research adding blog type tools to the existing site moving toward eliminating the [groups.io](https://groups.io) and possibly MailChimp applications. This would allow for our website to be the singular focus point for our content. We would consider creating “member-only” content once the migration of the existing data is completed.

We discussed the group's relationship with [HamReady.com](https://HamReady.com), which is a new enterprise started by Diane Schwantes from GumboCreations. Diane has been providing the member-related merchandise such as shirts, hats and other items. The club itself has received funds back on these sales staying with the goal of creating fundraising opportunities. [HamReady.com](https://HamReady.com) will offer these same services to other clubs on a newly created platform. PARC related items will be placed within a dedicated store on this platform where members can still purchase items. HR will handle merchandising, shipping, payment and other store front related tasks. An official proposal will be presented to the Board in the coming days for review. This will outline the percentage and/or amounts to be given back to the club for each sale.

A decision was made to remove the family membership level from the website. The option is rarely selected as it creates some confusion with how the “family” is defined. Jim will make this change immediately.

Next Member meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 2/24 at 7:30pm Jim will schedule the meeting in Zoom and send out the reminder with the link via [groups.io](https://groups.io) and MailChimp.

**Meeting adjourned at 18:00**

*David S. Pomerantz*

*Nemury Valladares*  
Nemury Valladares (Feb 25, 2026 13:11:57 EST)

*Jim Schwantes*  
Jim Schwantes (Feb 25, 2026 14:28:21 EST)