

## **Palmetto Amateur Radio Club**

### **March 2026 Board Meeting**

The board met on Sunday, 3/22/26 at 4pm EST to conduct the March 2026 Board meeting.

**Present:** David Pomerantz (President), Nemury Valladares (VP), Mike Sam (Repeater Trustee) and Jim Schwantes (Treasurer)

**Absent:** None

#### **Key takeaways**

- Member meeting moved to last Wednesday of the month at 8 PM to avoid conflict with GCARA meetings
- Board meetings will be recorded and posted publicly on the website for transparency, with 6-month retention on Zoom
- Ricky Eaton approved as membership coordinator
- Field Day participation will be coordinated with other clubs rather than hosting independently due to resource constraints
- Battery box fundraising project cancelled as retail options are more cost-effective than DIY production
- Insurance policy for repeater equipment to be established at approximately 70 dollars per year for 5,000 dollars coverage
- Website development underway to replace Groups.IO with member login system and content repository

#### **Discussed topics**

##### **Meeting Schedule Changes and Ricky's Membership Role**

The board discussed conflicts between PARC meetings and GCARA meetings, particularly affecting Ricky's ability to participate as membership coordinator.

- **Details**
  - Jim: Presented poll results showing 7 out of 20 respondents cannot attend fourth Tuesday meetings at 7 PM
  - Mike: Suggested moving meeting to 8 PM on Tuesday to accommodate dinner time

- Nemury: Noted 7 PM is problematic as he often arrives home at that time
- David: Proposed Tuesday at 8 PM as alternative to avoid GCARA conflict
- Jim: Explained GCARA now meets in person on same night, making time change insufficient
- **Conclusion**
  - Member meetings moved to last Wednesday of month at 8 PM effective immediately
  - Poll to be sent for April meeting to gather broader member input on preferred days and times
  - Ricky approved to work with membership despite meeting conflicts

### **Board Meeting Transparency and Recording Policy**

Discussion centered on one member's concerns about private board discussions and how to address transparency issues.

- **Details**
  - Jim: Explained members' complaints about private cliques and lack of transparency over past 2 months
  - David: Described discussion with member at testing event about board decision-making
  - Mike: Suggested making board meeting recordings public rather than combining board and member meetings
  - Jim: Clarified board discussions involve planning and justification, not secret decision-making
- **Conclusion**
  - Board meeting recordings will be posted on website for member review before member meetings
  - Videos will be retained for 6 months on Zoom account with 300GB storage capacity
  - First 5 minutes of member meetings to be allocated for questions about board minutes and recordings

## **Website Development and Groups.IO Migration**

Plans discussed for transitioning from Groups.IO to website-based membership system with enhanced features.

- **Details**

- Jim: Reported Jeff Dale working on WordPress membership module for SFLDXA club and offered to use PARC as beta tester
- Jim: Explained goal to move content from Groups.IO to website to provide better service to membership and retention of valuable content
- Mike: Asked about app functionality and email notification options
- David: Inquired about message board plugin availability for WordPress
- Nemury: Emphasized need for member login accounts to protect private information like treasurer reports

- **Conclusion**

- Website will include login system with member-only content access
- Expired members will lose website access and email update suspension
- Daily digest and thread muting features required in new system
- Timeline estimated at several months before Groups.IO replacement complete

## **Field Day Participation Strategy**

Board evaluated options for Field Day participation given club resources and membership size.

- **Details**

- Jim: Asked Nemury about participating with other clubs versus independent operation
- Nemury: Detailed South Dade setup with 4 acres, 3 towers, dedicated antennas, 4 stations running continuously
- Nemury: Noted requirements include 24-hour operation, food, rotation schedule, band pass filters, and significant logistics

- Mike: Expressed preference for PARC hopper events as mini field days with personal equipment setup
- David: Highlighted teachable moments at PARC events for new members
- **Conclusion**
  - PARC will not host independent Field Day due to insufficient membership, funding, and equipment
  - Members encouraged to participate with other clubs including GCARA, South Dade, or Davie Cooper City
  - PARC hopper events to continue as preferred club activity for hands-on learning
  - Board to reach out to other clubs next month regarding Field Day coordination
  - Florida QSO Party April 24-27 noted as opportunity for PARC hopper participation

### **Battery Box Fundraising Project Status**

Mike presented findings on battery box production costs versus retail pricing.

- **Details**
  - Mike: Reported boxes cost 10-15 dollars but accessories like USB ports cost 30-35 dollars each
  - Mike: Concluded cannot produce for 30-40 dollars and sell for 70 dollars as originally planned
  - David: Asked about alternative fundraising projects
  - Mike: Suggested ground radial kit for vertical antennas as possible alternative at 25 dollars price point
- **Conclusion**
  - Battery box project cancelled as not financially viable
  - Mike will attempt to sell prototype box to recoup investment
  - Board to consider alternative fundraising projects like antenna accessories or radial kits

## **Repeater Equipment Insurance**

Discussion of insurance coverage for club repeater equipment at tower site.

- **Details**

- Jim: Proposed opening insurance binder for 5,000 dollars coverage at approximately 70 dollars per year
- Jim: Specified coverage for existing repeater, duplexer, and battery system at replacement cost
- Mike: Confirmed most important equipment covered
- Jim: Noted expenditure under 250 dollars does not require member vote per bylaws

- **Conclusion**

- Insurance policy to be established by Monday or Tuesday
- Coverage amount set at 5,000 dollars for replacement cost
- Board approval sufficient without member vote due to cost under 250 dollars threshold

## **Meshtastic Repeater Node Testing**

Nemury and Mike reported on Meshtastic node testing at repeater site.

- **Details**

- Nemury: Reported successful RF-only communication from repeater to Stuart, approximately 100 miles
- Mike: Noted advantage of 350 feet elevation at tower site
- Nemury: Identified need for solar panel package costing approximately 198 dollars

- **Conclusion**

- Meshtastic node proven viable for long-distance communication from tower height
- Project kept on list pending funding availability
- Solar panel package required for permanent installation

## **Member Survey Results**

Review of member survey responses regarding meeting preferences and club operations.

- **Details**

- Jim: Reported 20 out of 46 members responded to survey after one week
- Jim: Suggested following up with non-respondents to determine if emails received
- David: Agreed to make results available to membership

- **Conclusion**

- Survey results to be included at end of board minutes on website
- Results primarily for resolving meeting time conflicts
- Follow-up emails to be sent to non-respondents

## **Equipment Sales and New Member Support**

Discussion of selling surplus equipment to new members.

- **Details**

- David: Reported on new testing members interested in purchasing HT radios
- Mike: Stated he has 9-10 HTs and could sell 6 of them
- David: Offered to coordinate sales through Groups.IO or website
- Mike: Suggested creating document for website equipment exchange section

- **Conclusion**

- Mike to compile list with pictures and pricing for available HTs
- David to distribute to new members and post on website
- Focus on affordable entry-level radios for new licensees

## **Action Item List Review**

Board reviewed and updated ongoing task list in shared Google spreadsheet.

- **Details**

- Mike: Confirmed equipment revaluation completed and ready to close

- Mike: Added task for changing repeater mailing address with FCC through ARRL
- Jim: Moved completed tasks to separate spreadsheet tab
- Jim: Confirmed all board members have editor rights to shared document
- Mike: Verified real-time updates working in Google Sheets
- **Conclusion**
  - Insurance task marked in progress with Jim assigned
  - Equipment revaluation marked completed
  - Repeater repair decision marked completed
  - FCC mailing address change assigned to Mike, status in progress
  - Board members to review and update list offline between meetings

### **Hamfest Reports and Future Events**

Brief discussion of recent Stuart Hamfest and upcoming events.

- **Details**
  - Jim: Reported Stuart Hamfest disappointing, walked twice and left by 10:30 AM
  - David: Asked about other upcoming Hamfest
  - Jim: Mentioned Shelby North Carolina in August and Dayton Ohio
- **Conclusion**
  - Stuart Hamfest attendance low with limited vendor selection
  - Next major event is Shelby North Carolina in August
  - Orlando Hamcation remains preferred event with RV camping option
  - Dayton attendance not planned by most board members due to distance

### **Action items**

- **Jim**
  - Open insurance binder for 5,000 dollars coverage at approximately 70 dollars per year by Monday or Tuesday

- Schedule Wednesday member meeting at 8 PM and send invitations through Groups.IO and MailChimp
- Create and distribute poll for April meeting preferences including day of week and time
- Update Florida Sunbiz registration with current board of directors next weekend
- Contact IRS regarding non-profit accounting requirements
- Send follow-up emails to members who did not respond to survey
- **David**
  - Create image for Wednesday meeting announcement
  - Upload meeting announcement to Facebook and Instagram
  - Post board meeting survey results at end of board minutes on website
  - Verify April PARC hopper date does not conflict with Field Day weekend
  - Coordinate equipment sales list distribution to new members
  - Update website equipment exchange section with available radios
- **Mike**
  - Change repeater mailing address with FCC through ARRL contact
  - Compile list with pictures and pricing for 6 available HT radios for sale
  - Consider developing ground radial kit for vertical antennas as fundraising project
- **Board Members**
  - Review and update action item list in shared Google spreadsheet offline
  - Announce board meeting recording policy at next member meeting on Wednesday

**Meeting adjourned at 5:45pm EST**