



Meeting Date: 9-23-2025

8:04pm – 9:18pm

Zoom Meeting Call

# Palmetto Amateur Radio Club

## General Meeting Minutes

### 1) Call to Order by President

- *Pledge allegiance to Flag*
- *Board Members Present: 4*
- *Board Members Absent: 1*
- Attendance: 11
- General Meeting Minutes approved for August 2026

### Quick recap

This was a general meeting of the Palmetto Amateur Radio Club where members discussed recent issues with club communications and repeater updates. The meeting began with technical difficulties as members joined different Zoom meetings, including some confusion about which meeting was the correct one for club business. The main discussion centered around a member named Gary who had been complaining on GMRS channel 22 about club spending and lack of repeater maintenance, which led to an argument between Gary and Ricky during their conversation. Mike provided an update on the repeater testing, reporting that the unit was working at 50 watts and had been returned with what appeared to be the same firmware version, though the club was still waiting for Mike to complete full testing before reinstalling it at the repeater site. The club discussed ongoing internet connectivity issues affecting Mike's ability to participate fully in the meeting, and Jim presented financial updates showing approximately \$728.50 in current club funds with \$440 in membership dues collected over the past year.

### Summary

#### Repeater Issues Discussion Meeting

Ricky and Jim discussed technical issues with Ricky's camera during the meeting setup. They then had a conversation about a club member who was complaining about repeater issues, with Ricky identifying the person as Gary McCluskey, a former Parkland police officer. The group agreed that this member, who hasn't attended club meetings, was misinformed about the club's current direction and repeater maintenance efforts.



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## **Repeater and Firmware Status Update**

Mike reported that his repeater is working properly at full power (50 watts) but experienced internet connectivity issues due to water in his pipes, with Comcast scheduled to fix the problem. The team discussed firmware versions for the DRX2 device, with Mike discovering that the reported upgrade to version 158 and DSP 5.03 may not have actually been implemented. Jim mentioned upcoming travel plans to Melbourne, where they will need to rent additional vehicles including an RV to transport equipment and a dog named Lucy.

## **Technical Equipment and Club Operations**

The group discussed technical equipment and club operations. Jim shared details about setting up a new Linux-based system with a USB-C monitor for \$29, while Mike mentioned upgrading his brother's computer to Linux. The conversation shifted to addressing complaints from a member named Gary who claimed the club wasn't keeping members informed, though Barry confirmed they do maintain member communication. Ricky provided an update on the remote station, noting it now has a faster computer and fewer glitches, with only three active users currently.

## **Vertical Antenna Testing Plans**

Ricky discussed plans to test a new vertical antenna to reduce noise from air conditioning equipment affecting the 80-meter band, which currently shows strong S9 signals. The group briefly discussed software versions and client recommendations, confirming that version 9.0326 is the latest and currently in use. The meeting experienced some technical difficulties with participants joining the wrong meeting and internet connectivity issues, and concluded with Ricky showing a comparison between different radio models.

## **Radio Repair and System Procedures**

Ricky discussed his work repairing radios at his job, explaining how he salvages damaged equipment and restores it using Deoxit and ribbon cables. He shared a story about receiving a \$100 tip from a boss who appreciated his assistance with airport logistics and retrieving forgotten golf clubs. The group briefly discussed radio call signs and system login procedures, with Jim clarifying the correct terminology should be "username" rather than "name" when entering call signs into the system.

## **Repeater Update and Grounding Issues**

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance and an apology from David regarding the cancellation of a park event due to rain. The group discussed a repeater update, with Jim reporting that it is currently being tested and producing 50 watts using the latest firmware. The team agreed to test the repeater further before reinstalling it, with particular attention to resolving grounding issues. Jim mentioned contacting Lightning Protection Services about these issues, though the repair history from the previous service was unclear.



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8:04pm – 9:18pm

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## **Financial and Organizational Updates Meeting**

The meeting focused on financial updates and organizational matters. Jim reported the current balance at approximately \$435 after accounting for outstanding checks and a membership refund. The group discussed submitting the 501(c)(3) registration form, which will cost \$275, though Jim indicated he wants to wait until more member funds are collected. There were communication issues regarding email distribution of member contact information, which Jim addressed by resending the information to Ricky and David. The discussion also covered the club's corporate filing requirements in Florida, with confirmation that Jim handles the annual renewal process through SunBiz, which costs around \$74 and includes a nonprofit filing exemption.

## **Club Communication Platform Discussion**

The group discussed communication platforms for club announcements, with consensus that the website (Palmetto ARC.org) is the best primary method. They explored using Groups.io special announcements as an alternative to avoid email overload, and Jim presented Ham Clubs Online as a potential new system that would consolidate databases and eliminate the \$300 annual MoneyMinder fee. The group acknowledged concerns about cloud-based services, with one member noting the potential risk of service providers disappearing.

## **Groups.io Settings and FCC Regulations**

Jim discussed email notification settings in Groups.io, noting that some members like Grammy and David had different preferences. David explained he preferred not receiving individual emails since he uses the mobile app frequently and receives notifications that way. The conversation then shifted to discussing FCC regulations around GMRS repeaters and Meshtastic devices, with Tony warning about potential legal issues with modified devices that exceed bandwidth limits. The conversation ended with Jim announcing he had won the 50-50 pot at Gold Coast and would be taking everyone to lunch.

## **Remote HF Radio System Presentation**

Ricky presented a remote HF radio system that allows club members to access a radio station via the internet, particularly benefiting those who cannot install outdoor antennas due to housing restrictions. He explained that the system, running RCF software through [remotehams.com](https://remotehams.com), connects members' computers to the club's radio equipment, including an ICOM 7300 at 250 feet elevation. Ricky noted that their club was the only one in Broward, Dade, or Palm Beach counties with this setup, though usage has been lower than expected despite initial enthusiasm.

## **Radio System and Event Planning**

Ricky clarified that trustees have no liability as long as operators use their assigned call signs, and explained how the radio system works on a first-come, first-serve basis. Jim asked about listening to the HF events while others are logged in, and Ricky confirmed that listeners can hear what the current operator is receiving but cannot transmit.



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Diane announced plans for the Melbourne event where she will demonstrate embroidery and heat press capabilities, including making name badges and exclusive items, with Jim confirming he will include Palmetto Club information in his booth.

### **Event Planning and Licensing Updates**

The group discussed upcoming events and testing opportunities. Diane presented new hat designs and giveaway items for upcoming shows including Melbourne, Tampa, Miami-Dade, Fort Myers, and Wilton Manors. David reported that Richard Beers successfully passed his technician and general licensing tests, and mentioned that general licensing updates will occur next summer with extra licensing to follow. The group confirmed a park hopper event is scheduled for October 17th at Markham Park, which will be held rain or shine.

### **Everglades Park Satellite Setup Plans**

Jim announced plans to visit Everglades Holiday Park on Sunday to set up for satellite work and help Diane get familiar with HF contacts, as she has been invited to join a POTA event with Julie and Vaughn. The group discussed various park locations including Fish Creek Outpost and Arthur R. Marshall, with some locations being more suitable for different activities like satellite work. Tony updated the group that Roberto had been released from the hospital but was still dealing with ongoing infection issues.

## **2) Adjournment by President**

David S. Pomerantz, adjourned the meeting at 9:18 pm EST.