

Oakland County Amateur Radio Public Service Corp (ARPSC)
W8OAK Repeaters – 146.900 MHz/100pl & 444.325 MHz/107.2pl
Weekly 2 meter net 8 pm every Thursday
Hospital Radio Net – 7:30 pm last Thursday of Month
Packet 144.950 MHz/1200 baud, connects made with Oakxxx or
Callsign-# to OAKBBS (W8OAK-3) with nodes at
OAKNOD (N8NM-1 Pontiac – most coverage),
OAKEOC (W8OAK-7 at EOC) or K8DTX-7 (White Lake)
APRS – 144.390 MHz
Web Site: <http://www.arpesc.com>
Next meeting is on Wednesday 7 June 2017

Meeting Minutes for 3 May 2017

On 3 May 2017 at 7:00 pm, Jim Richards - AB8JR, Emergency Coordinator (EC) for the Oakland County ARPSC, called the meeting to order in the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The order of business included:

(I). Report from Kevin Scheid, Homeland Security Division – Oakland County, KD8ZVO

This is our first meeting using “Webinar,” defined as a seminar or meeting conducted over the internet. Members from home can actually say hello to in-house staff and members, can write messages, and have their video image displayed when they talk and ask questions. A number of members did use this successfully tonight from home.

The department has been focusing on various types of training; one of which is training for the inhouse staff. Last April 11-12, 2017 was a training exercise called “April Showers” involving 65 people, including personnel from Southfield, Birmingham, Farmington Hills, Oakland County Incident Team, etc.

There have been changes in personnel. Ted Quisenberry retired as Oakland County Manager and Tom Hardesty replaced him. Sara Stoddard has been promoted to Chief Health Administrator. Mike Pousak resigned to take a different job and Mike Kuzilla replaced him as Regional Area Planner.

(II). Report from Emergency Coordinator (EC), Jim Richards – AB8JR:

W8OAK Repeater Status

There has been a change in our repeater status. Sara and Kevin have been working hard to get certain repairs finished. In the next several days, two more coax cables should be finished between the radio room and tower. This makes a total of six

coax lines. On the tower climb to complete cable and antennas, open bidding for this task will take place and is expected to take about a month.

Oak Apple Run 3 June 2017

Coming up is the 40th Annual Oak Apple Run on Saturday, 3 June 2017 in Royal Oak. Volunteers typically arrive about 6 am and the race is done by 10 or 11 am. On Wednesday 31 May 2017, there will be a pre-meeting for assignments. To volunteer, please contact Mike Van Buren – WD8S at wd8s@comcast.net. This group works closely with the Royal Oak Police on servicing this event.

Recent Public Health Meeting Presentation

Jim Richards – AB8JR and Kevin Scheid – KD8ZVO recently gave a presentation to the Oakland County Health Department. They wanted more information about the EOC and our part on their Health Department POD (Point of Dispensing) Exercise last September.

The EOC provides many support functions which include timely assistance and dissemination of warnings. Our ARPSC assists in certain areas including communications. Emergency communications has become an important concern with health providers that include hospitals, Region 2 North Medical, Medical Control Authority, Healthcare Coalition, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Homeland Security, and others. Many kinds of communications are needed for emergencies – TV, phone, fax, internet, email, 800 MHz radio, amateur radio, and even runners.

A description was given of our main VHF reception site, main VHF transmit site, receive sites through the county, and our UHF repeater. Our volunteers assist on Skywarn, EOC communication specialties, storm and other damage reports, community support to special events, and our communication potential when all other communications fail. Our assistance to hospital includes the ARPSC Hospital Net which was organized after the 2003 power-grid blackout and provides an essential back-up to standard communications. The Hospital Nets link county hospitals to our EOC.

JCAHO and Amateur Radio Operations

Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) performs accreditations of hospitals. They now recommend each hospital employ an amateur radio operator. This is not a requirement but a recommendation at this point in time.

On 17 February 2010, the American Hospital Association (AHA) filed a request for a blanket waiver of the Commission's rules to permit hospitals seeking accreditation to

use amateur radio operators who are hospital employees during drills and emergencies. On 14 July 2010, the FCC amended rules to permit “amateur radio operators to transmit messages, under certain limited circumstances, during either government-sponsored or non-government sponsored emergencies and disasters...regardless of whether the operators are employees of entities participation....”

JCAHO’s amateur radio recommendation impacts others: State EOC, County Emergency Managers, National Weather Service (NWS), Salvation Army deployment, etc.

One question is whether JCAHO understands the noncommercial requirements of amateur radio. Can an amateur radio hospital employee displace us on the ham bands? Will the hospital best benefit using a hospital employee to sit at an amateur radio during an emergency? Can a hospital operate outside the established amateur radio hospital network without creating interference? Would the hospital be able to staff such an entity 24-7? In the future, Jim will gather more information on this. We need clarification of what JCAHO wants. Our ARPSC does and will support, provide training, and assist public health communication.

Current Oakland County ARPSC Hospital Nets

Moving on to problems with our county ARPSC hospital nets: The last monthly Hospital Net had only 7 check-ins. Jim will to get together with Al Clawson who isn’t here tonight, to begin rebuilding this network by first finding volunteers to fill missing or absent hospital team captains. There are enough members for each hospital to have a team captain and three volunteers. Of particular need are McLaren Hospital – Pontiac, Providence Park Hospital – Novi, and one other. For any member not participating, please volunteer. You are needed. Email to jarichards@comcast.net. Also, there is a new Oakland County hospital to add to our ARPSC Hospital Net - DMC Children’s Hospital in Troy.

W8OAK Repeater – Things You Need to Know

When talking on the repeater, keep mind that you need delay slightly after keying up and before speaking. Net control operators frequently miss the first couple of call letters because the repeater has a lag before transmitting. It is something we can’t change. The solution is to key up and wait several seconds before speaking.

This delay can be visualized. Receive sites include Waterford, Novi, Southfield, Addison and Commerce. Waterford, Novi, and Commerce are in full operation now. Addison and Southfield need repair. Rochester is a 6th proposed site which would fill in weak areas in the northeastern edges of the county by using a tower on Rochester Road near Avon.

Your signal goes to one of these receive sites which sends it to the main receive site in on a water tower in Waterford. This incoming signal goes to a voter which chooses the strongest incoming signal from the transceiver sites. Next, the voter goes to a controller and sends the VHF signal out. A too strong signal can activate all the receive sites so strongly that voter confusion happens. It is best to use 5 – 10 watts of transmit power, if possible.

The main transit site in downtown Pontiac. The outgoing VHF signal goes to the repeater, is amplified, and sends a VHF signal out. All these actions cause delays and can lose up to two words before being sent out.

State EOC and Oakland County

The State EOC in Lansing wants us to communicate via simplex with them over VHF. Jim found that using 50 watts on the antenna at the EOC, the State EOC reports they can get 80-90% copy. This EOC antenna is much lower than the one in Downtown Pontiac which is currently under repair. The State EOC is able to transmit to and copy from Grand Rapids and Saginaw.

Michigan State Parks on the Air (MSPOTA)

Jim wants our ARPSC members to get more training, particularly with smaller exercises. He asked members if it would be worthwhile to sponsor one of the State Parks in Oakland County for an “on the air” special event station with other activities simulating an actual activation. Members responded with interest. Jim and Kevin first want to look at which park or parks might be best for this; i.e. Bald Mountain or Pontiac Lake Recreation Area. Using MSPOTA, this would give us training by going out to a site with one’s own equipment, setting up equipment, and making contacts. This could be done multiple times or for a multiple day activity.

What Is In Your Go-Kit?

A Go-Kit is a pre-packed collection of equipment and personal items that you need to have with you in the event of an activation. Go-Kits should allow you to be self-sufficient, particularly in the early stages of an incidents.

Role Assignment affects what you have in your Go-Kit.’ Assignment can be field radio operator, public safety “shadow” operator, mobile command post operator, command post operator, EOC radio operator, packet or digital operation and traffic net operator. **Nature of the Event** may be a widespread power outage, tornado and storm damage, flooding, infra-structure damage, epidemic or pandemic outbreak, or terrorism related activity. **Duration of Assignment** varies and should be used as a guideline to planning whether it is 0-3 hours (grab HT and go), 3-6 hours (spare battery), 6-13 hours, 12-24 hours or 12 to 72 hours. It probably is best to plan for 6 to 12-hour session.

Seasonal Considerations include appropriate clothing for summer or winter, protection from the sun, hydration, and dietary issues.

AB8JR's Quick Go Kit
For Activations Up to 12 Hours

Handheld VHF/UHF analog radio and Handheld UHF DMR radio
Radio Parts: Spare battery for each radio; plastic bag to isolate spare battery;
speaker/mic for each radio; charging base for each radio; Anderson Power Pole
extension cable; programming cables for each radio.
Cell Phone and charger
7500 mAh Power Bank
NIFOG (National Inter-op Field Operation Guide available at Homeland Security)
Note Pad, pens, pencils
Flashlight with spare batteries
Knife and Multi-function tool
Basic First aid kit
Windows based tablet with charger
Snacks, water, meds for 24-hour period, and cash.

(III). Assistant Emergency Coordinator Reports:

(1). Report from Pete Gladysz - K8PGJ, Operations

Pete held a Michigan QSO party several weeks ago, which included Mark Shaw – K8ED, Fred, Gerry Treas – K8GT, and Randy Love – WF5X. Band conditions were really bad, but they believe their contest scoring was high.

Results are in or 2017 CQWW DX SSB Contest for multi-operator multi-transmitter: South America (Curacao): PJ2T had 27,506,145 points which made these operators 1st in their category. Pete was part of this team.

(2). Report from Communications and Radio Systems – Mike Vander Veer – KD8ATK:

W8OAK nets are held weekly on Thursday evening at 8 pm on 146.900 MHz/100 pl. With the complexity of emergency situations, additional net control operators are needed and Mike will help you get started. More net control operators become critical when an emergency goes on for 3 to 7 days. If interested, please contact or email Mike Vander Veer at kd8atk@wowway.com.

(IV). Specialty Officer/Coordinator Reports:

(1). Sirens from Dave Roberts – K8RDG:

Our next siren net is Saturday, 6 May 2017. Please check-in with your Subnet Control for assignment first. Already, 108 sirens have been checked this year!

(2). National Traffic System (NTS) from Mark Shaw – K8ED:

National Traffic System can be found locally at SEMTN (Southeast Michigan Traffic Net) at 10:15 pm daily on 146.760 MHz/100 hz. Anyone interested getting into NTS, listening and then participating is an excellent way to get started. The SEMTN is on every night of the year. Mark is looking for net control operators.

(3). Report from Steve Walbrun - KD8WAA, Website:

Website credentials were passed out to members. This allows one to access our website at home. Our website should be ready in a month or so. Much of the website has been improved with new information and format. If there are problems, Steve's email address can be found at the bottom of the website pages. Jim Richards – AB8JR still wants to develop some sections but hasn't had the time. There is information about Skywarn and what to do with a real activation. The section which the public views has an excellent presentation.

(2). Report from Morrie Davidson, National Weather Service:

April had 3.55 inches of rain.

(V). Other Items

(1). Dayton Hamvention 2017 is 19-21 May 2017.

(2). Sno Drift Summer Rally is 5 August 2017. Volunteers are need and contact Barb Steencken at www.sno-drift.org

Respectfully submitted,
James R. Murphy, N8SML
Secretary, Oakland County, ARPSC, 4 May 2017
Minutes read and approved by Jim Richards – AB8JR, EC