

UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA
AMATEUR RADIO CLUB



Minutes of the Amateur Radio Club

University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, PA 19104

<http://www.seas.upenn.edu/alumni/amateurradioclub/home.html>

Monthly Meeting: Monday, August 20, 2007 via telephone conference call.

Attendees:

Jan Carman – K5MA, Howard Dicker – WA2IMB, Russ Miller – WA3FRP, Henning Olesen – W1YS, Terry Smith – K7YNO

All participants attended the meeting via conference telephone call.

President's Welcome and Update

President Russ Miller called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM and welcomed everyone.

Russ noted that the Club received an ARRL Contest Plaque for the 2006 ARRL Sweepstakes Phone competition (First in the ARRL Atlantic Division) with club member Fred, K3BHX, operating W3ABT.

Russ initiated a round-table discussion with each participant giving a brief history of their U Penn and ham radio activities.

A motion was made by Jan and seconded by Henning to accept the previously published meeting minutes for the May 7, 2007 club meeting.

Student Organization Fair

There was a brief discussion of the Student Organization Fair (previously known as 'Activities Night') to be held September 4th on campus. Mike Feeley and Donald Ying agreed to organize a Club table setup for the event on Locust Walk, which occurs after the incoming freshmen arrive on campus but before classes begin. Mention was made that a small Club handout flyer will be created for the new freshmen students. This is a large event with representatives available from nearly 400 campus organizations. This is an excellent Club recruiting opportunity.

ARRL/VEC

The Club now has three VEC's (Volunteer Examiners), who are able to administer Amateur Radio License exams for the Penn Community. The current VEC's are Mike Feeley, Henning Olesen and Fred Serota. The Club continues to search for more VEC's.

On-Campus Station

Terry gave some detail on the progress of the strategic plan to create a remote-operated HF station on campus. This appears to be the only practical way to establish an on-campus station because there is no room for station equipment or antennas in the Moore School building. The key to implementation of the remote station will be the development of an internet-based scheme to remote control a standard HF transceiver and its associated antenna systems that will be located on one of the University high-rise buildings in the vicinity of 39th & Spruce Streets. The idea is to recruit several senior engineering students to create the control equipment (hardware and software) designs as senior projects. The first project would be a HF digital-mode station, which could be expanded to include SSB and possibly CW. It is the general view that getting students involved in the design is a critical key to success.

There was a brief discussion of the difficulty in trying to re-establish a physical W3ABT station in the Moore School building. The problems include lack of available space and too much RFI to the new buildings in the area. A reasonable approach appears to be remote control a HF station on one of the high-rise buildings in the vicinity of 39th & Spruce Streets. The consensus is that it is not practical to secure suitable space in an on-campus building for physical station equipment in the same building that would also provide suitable roof access for antennas and the associated transmission lines. Key issues to finding an acceptable remote-control solution include security and access control.

Club Funding

The current club funding balance is \$572 as of the end of June, 2007. Only a current student can access the club funds. Donald Ying, as a student member and officer of the Club can access club funds. Estimates have been made that an additional \$1500 would be needed to fund the Strategic Plan. The question was asked if anyone, particularly alumni members, could donate a HF transceiver which includes the technology for remote operation. Most currently marketed HF transceivers above the entry level have this capability. Examples of typical radios that would be applicable to this project would be the Icom IC-756PRO, PRO II, and PRO III (approximately \$2600 new), the IC-706 and the Kenwood TS-2000 and TS-480 (approximately \$1000 new). Terry agreed to work with Jan, K5MA, to identify a list of transceivers that can be remote controlled. The remote station controller PC would need to be a Pentium machine in the 1GHz speed range running any Microsoft operating system of recent vintage (not Vista). The Club would need a machine with a legal copy of its operating system so that it can continue to receive Microsoft updates. The Club web site will accept credit cards for tax-deductible donations from members.

For the Club to receive any form of University funding from the Student Activity Council, all of the Club leadership (titled positions) must be occupied by current students (undergraduate or graduate).

The meeting was concluded at 2:03 PM. The next Club monthly meeting will on September 24, 2007 from 4:30 PM to 5:30 PM in Moore School Room 317.

Minutes prepared and submitted by:
Jan Carman, Secretary and Russ Miller, President