

QSA-3

Our club newsletter is called QSA-5 which means your signal strength is very good. QSA-3 means your signal strength is fairly good. The implication being that this is a fairly good imitation of a real issue of QSA-5.

I need to start by asking you all to stand up and give a big round of applause for Ed Essick K6ELE. Ed joined our board several years back and at the same time took on the job of publishing QSA-5 and the job of club Treasurer. With his term limited off the board he is also stepping away from both other jobs. Ed has done outstanding work on the board, he also produced a consistently excellent newsletter and he moved us from a shoe box of loose receipts to an on-line accounting system. His shoes indeed will be very tough to fill and I am guessing the work will require more than one person. If you are interested in the QSA-5 position, let me know at wa6uds@w6sg.net.

Since the first Friday of January has already passed but we have not met, this is a reminder that we will be meeting on the Friday 8 January at 7:30pm on zoom. I already sent out the invitation to that meeting but if you have not yet received it let me know at wa6uds@w6sg.net. The next board meeting will take place on Thursday 14 January on zoom. This will be the first meeting of the 2021 board of directors and we will be choosing the named board positions. If you are interested in observing drop me an email and I will send you an invite.

Another member who deserves our thanks is Steve Fischer K6ETA. Steve remade our VE committee to work in the age of COVID. He has now moved up to Shasta and so we need to find someone to take up the reins of the VE committee. If you are interested please let me know. Fortunately the mechanics are worked out but we still need a leader.

2020 has been a year that we will not soon forget. We lost two repeater sites, had to re-engineer our simulcast system, and added a new repeater site. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to Dough Slusher KF6AKU and his technical committee for their diligent and hard work to get us moved to our new configuration. We also had to cancel all our regular Public Service events. Our Public Service team reworked some of the event days into practice sessions. We are after all Hams, nothing if not adaptable. Given the presumably more infectious variant of the virus and the relatively slow rollout of the vaccine the 2021 schedule is far from certain we will adapt and meet the challenge.

In 2020 we learned to zoom. It is hardly a replacement for the kind of face to face meetings we had in the before times, and I no longer get to eat pizza on a monthly basis. On the plus side we are seeing better attendance to our monthly meetings, perhaps if only because you don't have to drive around in the dark. (no comments about me being always in the dark) I am also pleased that we have more attendance at our board meetings. Although not the first to utter the sentiment Mr Justice Brandeis said that Sunlight is the best Disinfectant and having non board members keeping us honest brings that sunlight to the board.

I could go on about 2020 but I will spare you any more of my drivel. The remainder of this document will be meeting minutes and financial reports.

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

December 10, 2020

Held at: On Zoom on line.

Board members present: Curtis Ardourel WA6UDS, President; Marc Bruvry KF6VNT, Vice President; Milt Hyams KM6ASI, Secretary; Ed Essick K6ELE, Treasurer; Anthony (Skip) Fedanzo KJ6ARL; and K6GWE Trustee Doug Slusher, KF6AKU.

Absent: ; W6SG Trustee Mitch Martin WU1Q, members.

Other attendees: Board Members elect, Mark Klein, KM6AOW and Bruce Bartel, N6VLB observed the meeting on-line.

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:48 pm by Curtis Ardourel.
The agenda was adopted as submitted without objection.

2. Approve minutes:

Minutes of the November 12, 2020, board meeting were approved without objection.

3. Secretary's Report (External Communications):

None.

4. Treasurer's Report:

None.

5. Membership Chair Report:

Curtis reported that as of December 10, there are 138 members current for this year, 101% of total paid membership at the end of last year. Curtis announced that 6 members had renewed for 2021 as well.

6. Facilities:

None.

7. Old business:

a. Ed reported that we had received two bids for installing the base for the antenna tower at the Clubhouse: Fred Connor for \$9000 and Van Midde Concrete for \$5000, which included hauling debris.

Ed moved and Marc seconded a motion that MARS accept the Van Midde bid as submitted. The motion was unanimously approved by those present for the vote with Curtis, Marc, Milt, Skip and Ed voting to approve the motion. Doug was not present for the vote.

b. Curtis reported that he is writing a brochure that can be used for publicizing the club and to solicit new members. ARRL SF Section Manager, Bill Hillendahl, has given Jerry Foster some back issues of *On the Air*, the ARRL publication for new hams, for possible distribution at Critical Mass training events as recruiting materials.

c. A number of members have expressed interested in a Paid Life Membership category for the club. Since the new treasurer should participate in any discussions on creation of a new membership category that might have longer term financial implications, Curtis directed that the matter will be tabled until the March Board meeting.

8. **New business:**

9. **Good of the order:**

The Board wanted to extend its sincerest thanks to Mitch Martin for his excellent service to the club. Mitch has elected not to run for reelection to the Board for personal reasons creating demands on this time. Doug reinforced the Board's thanks by recognizing his willingness to always stepping up when he was needed. The Board looks forward to his future service to the club as continuing W6SG Trustee and possibly as a Board member again in the future.

It has been suggested that the January Board of Directors Meeting be held at the Clubhouse. It will be election of club officers and orientation of new Board members. A final decision will be made at the December Board meeting and will turn on the COVID situation in the County at that time.

Next General Membership Meeting will January 8, 2021.

Next Board of Directors Meeting will be January 14, 2021

10 **Executive Session.**

Skip presented an off-the-record briefing on a actions to create a radio amateur volunteer organization in the County to support VOAD and other non-governmental disaster support organizations.

11. **Adjournment:**

Meeting adjourned at 8:49 pm

Respectfully submitted by

Milton Hyams

Secretary, on December 15, 2020

MINUTES
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
December 4, 2020

Held on: Zoom on line.

2. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 pm by President Curtis Ardourel.

3. Introductions:

There were a total of 31 members and guests participating. Board members and officers present: Curtis Ardourel WA6UDS, President; Milt Hyams KM6ASI, Treasurer; Anthony (Skip) Fedanzo, KJ6ARL; and K6GWE Trustee Doug Slusher, KF6AKU, members.

4. New Members:

New member Michael Green, KN6MBD, San Rafael, was introduced, but was not present.

4. Adopt Agenda:

The hidden agenda, as submitted to the Secretary, only, was adopted without objection.

5. Approve Minutes:

Minutes of the General Meeting of November 6, 2020, was not submitted for approval as it has not been published in QSA 5 yet.

6. Board Actions:

Curtis reported that the Board discussed a proposal to create a paid-up category of life membership in MARS. A number of questions were raised concerning the cash flow and budget considerations of creating such a membership category. It was decided to table the proposal until after the first of the year when a new Treasurer would be elected, since that person would have to deal with the consequences of a decision to create a paid-up membership.

Curtis also reported that he, with input from Milt, submitted a letter to the FCC on behalf of the club opposing the NPRM proposing establishment of a \$50 application fee for amateur radio licenses. A copy of the letter will be posted on the club website.

7. Fun with Ham Radio:

John WB6PIT reported that he was getting back into ham radio. He wanted to introduce himself and wants to get onto the repeater. He was given a Kenwood HT by a friend and wanted advice on programming the radio for the repeater. Several members commented that his HT was an excellent one and offered advice on programming the radio. As he lives in Novato, Steve, KB6HOH suggested that he go simplex on 147.585 to contact hams in his neighborhood.

Larry Bradley, KK6QPE, reported that he has completed remodel of his ham shack which is now totally independent of the grid. He stated he will be going to Oregon to visit his father, who will be turning 100. He wants to operate remotely while there.

8. Secretary's Report—External Communications:

Milt reported receiving only routine correspondence.

9. Treasurer's Report:

There was no Treasurer's report.

10. Committee and other Reports:

Membership : As of this morning, November 6th, we have 137 paid up members, 101% of the year-end membership for 2019. He will send out notices to renew membership for 2021 in the next week or so.

Facilities: Doug reported that the tenant had an issue with a tripped circuit breaker due to improper installation of a space heater. Milt fixed the problem.

11. Old business:

Curtis announced the results of the Board election as follows:

Candidate	Votes	Status
Jim Saltzgaber - KM6WWY	19	
Bruce Bartel – N6VLB	25	Elected
Charles Benet – AI6TT	14	
Brian Cooley – K6EZX	34	Elected
Mark Klein – KM6AOW	33	Elected
Curtis Ardourel – WA6UDS	39	Elected

Curtis noted that this was the first contested Board election in a number of years. He wanted to encourage those that ran for the Board, but were not elected this time, to continue to be active in club affairs. He noted that they would be the leading candidates for appointment to the Board should there be any openings mid-term. Their interest in participation is critical to the health and continued success of the club.

12. New business:

Curtis noted that the next General Membership Meeting is scheduled for January 1st. After discussion and at the suggestion of Alan, WA6DNR, it was decided to move the next General Membership Meeting to Friday, January 8, 2021 at 7:30 PM on Zoom.

Curtis announced the club award winners for 2020:

Ham of the Year – Steve Fischer K6ETA Steve was recognized especially for his service in resurrecting the club VE examinations and conducting a very successful testing session using COVID distancing protocols.

Hi Roberts Career Service – Ed Essick K6ELE Upon his retirement from the Board of Directors, Ed was recognized for his long and excellent service on the Board of Directors, as club Treasurer and additionally as editor of the club newsletter, QSA-5. It was noted that he is going to be hard to replace in those positions.

John Butler “Elmer” - Brian Cooley K6EZX Brian was recognized for the excellent training videos he has produced on net communications for new hams.

Ted McMillian – Bo Lamb KN6EIF Bo was recognized for his advancement of the amateur radio hobby by a youngster through establishing and conducting the “Newbie Net” on Wednesdays which has developed into a technical net for all hams.

13. Good of the order:

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 10th, at 7:30 PM. The next General Membership Meeting will be January 8, 2021, on Zoom.

Comprehensive COVID shut downs will resume in Marin next Tuesday affecting all group activities until January 4, 2021. How this affects club activities for next year will be reviewed after that date.

14.Adjournment: It was **M/S/A** that the meeting be adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Presentation: There was no presentation.

Respectfully submitted by

Milton Hyams.

Secretary, on December 6, 2020.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

November 12, 2020

Held at: On Zoom on line.

Board members present: Curtis Ardourel WA6UDS, President; Marc Bruvry KF6VNT, Vice President; Milt Hyams KM6ASI, Secretary; Anthony (Skip) Fedanzo KJ6ARL; and K6GWE Trustee Doug Slusher, KF6AKU.

Absent: Ed Essick K6ELE, Treasurer; W6SG Trustee Mitch Martin WU1Q, members.

Other attendees: Nine other members observed the meeting on-line.

5. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 pm by Curtis Ardourel.
The agenda was adopted as submitted without objection.

2. Approve minutes:

Minutes of the October 15, 2020, board meeting were approved without objection.

3. Secretary's Report (External Communications):

Correspondence consisted of some bills for Ed to pay and signs from the elections department to post on the Clubhouse to the effect that the Clubhouse will not be a polling place for this election. Milt reported that he posted the signs as requested.

4. Treasurer's Report:

The most recent Balance Sheet was published in QSA-5.

5. Membership Chair Report:

Curtis reported that as of November 12th, there are 136 members current for this year, 99% of total paid membership at the end of last year. Curtis announced that ballots for the Board of Directors election will be sent to all current members in the next few days.

6. Facilities:

Doug reported that he visited the Clubhouse on Tuesday, November 10th and all was well. He removed signs which had been posted concerning the Election. No water leaks were observed.

Doug also reported that he and Michael Fischer are coordinating a survey of the County mapping VHF simulcast network coverage. The final product will be a map of coverage that can be used for Public Service events and for RACES.

7. Old business:

c. Milt reported that Ed, who is chairing the club antenna project, has been in contact with the county Building Department and resolving getting a building permit.

d. Doug reported that the Ward Peak repeater is at the clubhouse and that he has ordered a cover for the repeater that permits installation of a computer for testing and programming.

e. Skip reported that the work group is progressing on the volunteer radio operator program to provide emergency communications support to VOAD and Community Based Organizations. The group is working on obtaining sponsorship of an amateur radio volunteer group that will provide this support outside of RACES.

f. Curtis reported that he is writing a brochure that can be used for publicizing the club and to solicit new members. This brochure will be distributed at VE testing and will be available at public events. ARRL SF Section Manager, Bill Hillendahl, has obtained some back issues of *On the Air*, the ARRL publication for new hams, for possible distribution at Critical Mass training events.

e. A number of members have expressed interested in a Paid Life Membership category for the club. Currently there is only the Honorary Life Membership which has been awarded to relatively few members and is specifically provided for in the By-Laws. To create a new category of membership will require a By-Law amendment. There is discussion about possibly setting the payment for such a membership at an actuarial rate taking into consideration the age of the applicant. It was pointed out there would be cash flow ramifications to the club if a number of members take advantage of such a program, however the principal income from MARS is rent from the clubhouse apartment and not dues. The San Francisco Amateur Radio Club and MDARC have such programs that could provide models. After discussion, it was decided to table taking any action on this proposal until after the board elections since we will be electing a new treasurer. The new treasurer should participate in any decisions on creation of a new membership category that might have longer term financial implications. The matter will be brought back before the Board at its March meeting.

8. New business:

a. The club was asked our ARRL representatives to submit comments to the FCC objecting to their Notice of Proposed Rule Making which will require amateur radio licensees to pay a \$50 fee for each amateur radio application for new licenses, license renewals, upgrades to existing licenses and vanity call sign requests as well as for a printed copy of an existing license. It is the position of the FCC that they are required by law to recover from applicants the costs involved in filing and handling applications. The amateur radio community objects to re-implementing these fees because of the public service nature of amateur radio and that the cost to the FCC in administering amateur radio licensing is between minimal and non-existent because it is fully automated under the Universal Licensing System. After discussion it was decided that MARS should formally submit a comment objecting to the NPRM.

It was **M/S/A** that Curtis, with the assistance of Milt, should submit a letter to the FCC, on behalf of MARS, formally objecting to their NPRM calling for restoring application fees for amateur radio licensing and that members should be encouraged to also file individual letters to the same effect.

b. December is traditionally the month in which MARS has recognized some of its members for exceptional service. Curtis announced that the following awards are up for nomination this year:

1. Ham of the year –(To be nominated by Board members or committee chairs as opposed to prior winners.)
2. Hi Roberts Award Career Service Award
3. John Butler “Elmer” Award
4. Ted McMillian Youth Service and Advancement of Amateur Radio

Board members and committee chairs are requested to submit their nominations to Curtis by e-mail in the next two weeks so that award winners can be selected in advance of the December General Membership meeting. Curtis will come back to the Board if there are no nominations for an award or the person nominated has been a prior recipient of the award for which they were nominated.

9. Good of the order:

The Board wanted to extend its sincerest thanks to Mitch Martin for his excellent service to the club. Mitch has elected not to run for reelection to the Board for personal reasons creating demands on this time. Doug reinforced the Board’s thanks by recognizing his willingness to always stepping up when he was needed. The Board looks forward to his future service to the club as continuing W6SG Trustee and possibly as a Board member again in the future.

It has been suggested that the January Board of Directors Meeting be held at the Clubhouse. It will be election of club officers and orientation of new Board members. A final decision will be made at the December Board meeting and will turn on the COVID situation in the County at that time.

Next General Membership Meeting will December 4, 2020.
Next Board of Directors Meeting will be December 10, 2020.

10. Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 8:29 pm

Respectfully submitted by

Milton Hyams

Secretary, on November 13, 2020

MINUTES
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
November 6, 2020

Held on: Zoom on line.

6. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm by President Curtis Ardourel.

7. Introductions:

There were a total of 35 members and guests participating. Board members and officers present: Curtis Ardourel WA6UDS, President; Milt Hyams KM6ASI, Secretary; Ed Essick, K6ELE, Treasurer; Anthony (Skip) Fedanzo, KJ6ARL; and K6GWE Trustee Doug Slusher, KF6AKU, members.

8. New Members:

New members Ken Brownfield, AB6JR, Novato, who was present at the meeting; Callum Hutchins, KN6KQR, San Francisco; and Bret Wittman, Novato, were introduced.

4. Adopt Agenda:

The agenda was adopted, as submitted, without objection.

5. Approve Minutes:

Minutes of the General Meetings of August 7, 2020, and October 2, 2020, as published in QSA-5, were approved without objection.

6. Board Actions:

Curtis reported that the October Board meeting dealt further with MARS' possible options for support of VOAD. It also reviewed the Public Service activities for the year, which have officially ended. While there were no public service events held due to COVID, two drills were conducted to maintain skills. Our supported organizations have started planning the events for 2021 with which we will be involved. The Spring Public Service Meeting/Debrief will be held on Zoom instead of at the usual luncheon.

The November Board meeting will be held next Thursday on Zoom. Those interested in attending can obtain Zoom credentials from Curtis.

7. Fun with Ham Radio:

Larry Loomer, KI6LNB, questioned the spelling of "Newbie" in Newbie Net. Thought it should be "Newbee." Brian Cooley, K6EZX, responded that "Newbie" was correct. No action was taken to change the name of the net.

Larry Bradley, KK6QPE, reported being in the process of installing a 12 volt solar power supply for his radio shack to make it totally independent of the grid. He used the book ***Solar and 12 Volt Power for Beginners*** by George Eccleston as his guide. He recommends this book for such projects. He has determined the amperage requirements of his shack and has two 100W solar panels which he will use to charge two 35 ampere hour deep cycle batteries he has wired in parallel. The power supply will be wired to provide up to 29 amps maximum to his rigs.

Stan Witherspoon, AI6NF, reported that he obtained the plans for a packet radio board kit for UHF from tarpin.net, and purchased the board and the parts for about \$20. It has been assembled, but he has not run it yet.

Andrew Musselman, KI6UOC, reported that he participated in a job interview on Zoom, and got the job.

Doug reported having seen a new packet mono-band/wide band packet radio for HF in *IEE* magazine. It has fast capabilities and could support TCP-IP. He sent a copy of the article to Steve Wilson, W6SDY, to review as a possible packet terminal for the field for RACES.

8. Secretary's Report—External Communications:

Correspondence consisted of some bills for Ed to pay and signs to post on the Clubhouse to the effect that the Clubhouse will not be a polling place for this election. Milt reported that he posted the signs as requested.

9. Treasurer's Report:

The financial reports are in the latest QSA-5. He added that we have \$37,650 in our CD account; \$14,300 in our checking account and \$1305 in the building account.

10. Committee and other Reports:

Membership : As of this morning, November 6th, we have 135 paid up members, 99% of the year-end membership for 2019. He also stated that it is now possible to renew membership for 2021 on line.

Facilities: Doug reported that he checked out the Clubhouse for water leaks as a result of a very high water bill for last cycle. He found no leaks but will contact a plumber and the MMWD to follow up on the cause of the high billing.

He suggested that January would be a good month to hold an in-person Board meeting in the Clubhouse since there will be officer elections by the Board.

Doug and Milt requested that anyone using the radio equipment in the Clubhouse should make sure that it is off when they leave.

11. Old business:

Curtis announced that there will be no club Christmas Party this year due to COVID. The Board was unable to find an acceptable safe alternative. There will be a December General Membership Meeting on Zoom. We will try to have door prizes. The exact format will be a subject at the next Board meeting.

12. New business:

There is a new net for new or beginning hams, called the Newbie Net, conducted on the simulcast network, Michael Fischer's Zoom channel and 2M simplex at 147.555 on Wednesday nights at 7:30PM. The host is Bo Lamb.

Curtis stated that he has received some inquiries about a Paid-Up Permanent form of Life Membership. Currently there is only the Honorary Life Membership which has been awarded to relatively few members and is specifically provided for in the By-Laws. To create a new category of membership will require a By-Law amendment. There is discussion about possibly setting the payment for such a membership at an actuarial rate taking into consideration the age of the applicant. It was pointed out there would be cash flow ramifications to the club if a number of members take advantage of such a program. It was also pointed out that the San Francisco Amateur Radio Club has such a program we could look into if we decide to implement this category of membership. There appears to be enough interest to merit further study.

There have been some requests to re-open the Clubhouse on Sunday mornings for resumption of "Bible Study" sessions. The issue is safety in light of the COVID pandemic. Opening the Clubhouse would be limited to only 6 people at a time, social distancing and masks would be required and cleaning of the facility would be

required. There would also have to be someone in charge to monitor compliance. Curtis took a survey of those who might be interested and the response was so small that he has decided to table the issue for now.

There will be an election for Board of Directors of the club in November. There will be four positions up for election and Curtis is the only incumbent seeking re-election. Curtis announced the slate of candidates. The candidates seeking election to the MARS Board of Directors are:

Jim Saltzgaber KM6WWY
Brian Cooley KM6EZX
Bruce Bartel N6VLB
Charles Benet AI6TT
Mark Klein KM6AOW
Curtis Ardourel WA6UDS

Each introduced themselves and made brief statements about their interest in service as a Board member.

Member Antonis Papatsaras, who is also President of the San Francisco Amateur Radio Club, announced that the SFARC will be holding a special event tomorrow (Saturday, November 7) on Angel Island. There will be SOTA, POTA and US IOTA teams from three different sites on the island. They will have HF (SSB and CW), VHF and UHF stations operating. The frequencies are listed on their website. Due to COVID, participation is limited, but there is one opening due to a last minute drop out for anyone from MARS who might be interested. The ferry will leave from Tiburon at 10AM. It is hoped that MARS members will make contact with their event stations.

13. Good of the order:

Jim Salzgeber stated that he has received questions from members of his community about communications during PSPS and other potential communications shut downs in the event of emergencies. They seemed to be interested in learning about communications and possibly taking classes on amateur radio so that they could participate as hams. Larry Bradley, President of MDARC, offered to allow all those interested in taking licensing classes offered by MDARC. Other communications alternatives such as FRS and GMRS were suggested for neighborhood response groups to communicate with each other under emergency conditions.

Curtis will extend the Zoom session after the close of the formal meeting so that members can socialize.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 13, at 7:30 PM. The next General Membership Meeting will be December 4, 2020, on Zoom.

14.Adjournment: It was **M/S/A** that the meeting be adjourned at 9:06 pm.

Presentation: There was no presentation.

Respectfully submitted by

Milton Hyams.

Secretary, on November 7, 2020.