

ARRL Executive Committee Meeting
June 8, 2021
11:00 AM ET via Zoom

1. The Executive Committee of the ARRL Board of Directors was called to order at 11:04 AM Eastern Time via Zoom with President Rick Roderick, K5UR, in the Chair. Present were Committee members Tom Abernethy, W3TOM; Kermit Carlson, W9XA; Bud Hippisley, W2RU; John Robert Stratton, N5AUS; Dale Williams, WA8EFK; Mike Raisbeck, K1TWF; and David Minster, NA2AA. Also present were ARRL FCC Counsel David Siddall, K3ZJ, and Carla Pereira, KC1HSX, serving as meeting recorder.

Present as observers were Fred Hopengarten, K1VR, Ria Jairam, N2RJ, Bill Lippert, AC0W, Dick Norton, N6AA, Mike Ritz, W7VO, Bob Famiglio, K3RF, Ed Hudgens, WB4RHQ, Carl Luetzelschwab, K9LA, Mark Tharp, KB7HDX, Scott Yonally, N8SY, Rod Stafford, W6ROD, and Bob Vallio, W6RGG.

2. On the motion of Mr. Stratton, seconded by Mr. Abernethy, the Agenda was ADOPTED.

3. Chief Executive Officer/Secretary's update – Mr. Minster

Mr. Minster requested to move into a Committee of the Whole to discuss personnel matters.

On the motion of Mr. Carlson, seconded by Mr. Hippisley, the Committee moved into a Committee of the Whole from 11:06 – 11:45 AM.

4. Upon the motion of Mr. Carlson, seconded by Mr. Abernethy, the report of the Committee of the Whole was ADOPTED.

5. Mr. Minster returned to his report. He stated that Personify is heading into its final stretch and we are completing the interfacing between Personify and ARRL's internal system. He also discussed different scenarios for launching the site once Personify is ready to go. Mr. Minster also reviewed the status of the grand reopening of HQ, with Mr. Roderick noting that all ODV members would be authorized to attend the opening if they desired. State protocols will continue to be observed. There was then a discussion about Section Managers and how to get them more fully engaged, with Mr. Minster adding that he has Zoom meetings scheduled with Section Managers this week.

Responding to questions, Mr. Minster updated the Committee on the status of our warehouse search, upgrading the paper quality of QST, and a brief discussion about the ARRL style guide. Mr. Minster next discussed manual options for processing Life Member installment payments on credit cards or check; once the matter of executing the installments has been resolved he will update the Committee.

Responding to a question regarding club engagement, the Committee discussed potential incentives to recruiting and renewing members through clubs. The Committee also discussed clarifying what the expectations should be between the League and hamfests/club events that request ARRL affiliation. There was then discussion about the current status of VE electronic filing, with Mr. Minster noting that the organization is looking at reviewing the entire process from beginning to end.

The Committee was on break from 1:12 – 1:26 PM with all returning as noted above.

6. FCC Counsel: Mr. Siddall

Mr. Siddall presented highlights of his written report, noting that FCC staff is expected to start returning to their offices in September. He recapped recent meetings and conversations covering the need for a decision in the symbol rate proceeding, application fees that are expected to go into effect by the end of

this summer, the band plan, VEC matters, and confirmation, that while the FCC will require email addresses in FCC Form 605 applications, they will not be made public.

The Committee next discussed RF Safety, with Mr. Siddall noting the RF Safety Committee's work with the FCC, especially in determining how to evaluate mobile and handheld equipment. Mr. Carlson also discussed issues regarding equipment authorization concerns, including as related to testing.

Addressing spectrum matters, he explained that in the 5.850-5.895 GHz sub-band the FCC replaced the vehicular technology primary allocation with unlicensed WiFi that does not have allocation status. Vehicular operations could require cessation of interfering Amateur operations, and did so in at least one instance despite testing in only a very few geographic areas. Replacing it with unlicensed WiFi elevates our secondary allocation to *de facto* primary status. Unlike vehicular uses, unlicensed WiFi operators cannot shut down interfering Amateur operations, and must themselves avoid interfering with Amateurs. While generally this has not been effective where home routers are widespread, outdoor point-to-point and point-to-multipoint operations by Wireless Internet Service Providers (WISPs) in this segment are the most likely to interfere with Amateur operations, but know that they are required to cooperate with Amateurs to avoid interference or must shut down. The elimination from the sub-band of vehicular technology, which had been intended to operate nationwide on most roads and highways, eliminated the only non-federal primary user that could require Amateur operations to shut down. (Amateur operations remain secondary to federal government operations, as always.)

Responding to a question regarding the FCC's timeline on addressing Amateur radio-specific issues, Mr. Siddall stated that with regard to the band plan, it would be most effective to submit it when the FCC is in a "receiving mode" on Amateur proceedings.

Mr. Siddall reported that he had, at the request of the Executive Committee, contacted FCC Chairwoman Rosenworcel's office to respectfully express the ARRL's frustration at the failure of the FCC to resolve Amateur Radio related proceedings, some of which have been languishing at the FCC for as long as eight (8) years and to urge the FCC to move forward on the resolution of the long overdue issues that are pending in the Wireless Bureau. These include:

- Docket 16-239 (symbol rate): Initiated by ARRL petition filed on Nov. 15, 2013; assigned RM-11708. After receiving comments, the FCC adopted a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) proposing to delete the 300-baud symbol rate as requested, but declining to propose any bandwidth limitation in its place. This NPRM was adopted by the Commission on July 27, 2016, comments received, and remains pending.
- RM-11828 (Enhancing Technician Class Privileges) would, among other proposals, allow the entering (technician) class licensee to engage in and learn digital and voice communication on limited portions of the HF bands below 10 meters. Petition filed by ARRL on February 28, 2018, assigned RM-11828, comments received, and remains pending.
- RM-11759 (Rebalancing the 80/75 Meter Sub-bands) would relieve congestion that is particularly bad in portions of the band. CW and digital modes are squeezed below 3.600. Petition filed by ARRL on January 8, 2016, comments received, and remains pending.
- RM-11767 (Eliminating the 15 dB HF Amplifier Gain Limit) would delete the 15 dB HF amplifier restriction originally adopted in 1978 within a set of rules, many since repealed, that intended to prevent use of Amateur HF amplifiers by CBers. Many modern amplifiers use LDMOS devices that have greater gain capabilities than tubes, but cannot be marketed in the U.S. without modification to limit gain. This petition was filed by Expert Linears America, LLC on April 7, 2016, comments received, and remains pending. Expert Linears filed a Petition for Waiver of the same rule on June 11, 2016. After receiving comment, the Wireless Bureau denied

the waiver request on Dec. 27, 2016, finding in part that ruling on the waiver request would prejudice the outcome of the petition for rulemaking by prematurely deciding the issue.

Mr. Siddall noted that there are three items ripe for final decision. The symbol rate proceeding, in which there are two issues: removal of the 300 Baud limit, and adoption of a potential bandwidth limit as a replacement. A second item ready for decision is a petition requesting clarification of the term encrypted communication as used in the Amateur rules, which was put out for comment in December, 2019. Finally, a petition proposing that more VECs be authorized was placed on public comment earlier this year and can be acted upon by staff at any time. He added that the Administrative Procedures Act (APA) requires the FCC to issue NPRMs on the remaining matters referenced above before they can be decided.

Mr. Roderick voiced his deep personal displeasure with the lack of action by the FCC on Amateur matters that are impairing the Amateur Service, saying that “it is embarrassing that American Amateurs built upon its century-old tradition of message handling by developing many of the original digital message-handling techniques currently in widespread use, but due to a 1980’s-era rule are prevented from communicating with stations in other countries using the most efficient state-of-the-art digital techniques.” Continuing, Mr. Roderick commented that even more damaging is that the 1980’s-era rule, and the delay in addressing other Amateur proceedings, some of which have been languishing for over eight years, are collectively preventing the Amateur Service from advancing the skills of new Hams in both communications and technical phases of the advancement of the radio arts. Ending his comments, he shared his belief that efforts of the Amateur Service to recruit new Hams and interest students in STEM subjects are being thwarted by the lack of FCC action on long-pending matters that the ARRL has repeatedly urged the FCC to update and allow American Amateur Operators to join the rest of the world’s Amateurs in the experimentation and development of exciting new communication modes.

Individual Members of the Executive Committee expressed similar concerns in support of Mr. Roderick’s comments. The Committee formally requested that Mr. Siddall redouble his efforts to persuade the FCC to timely act on the pending Amateur matters listed above.

7. EMC Committee/FCC Counsel/Part 90 – Mr. Carlson

Mr. Carlson presented a summary of his report regarding new products that are not compliant with FCC and/or Amateur Radio rules. There was discussion on how best to proactively engage the Commission on these concerns. Mr. Carlson will update the Committee at its next meeting.

8. Trademark Update – Mr. Famiglio

Mr. Famiglio presented a review of his report on matters relating to ARRL Trademarks. He reported on the status of outstanding matters, earlier and newly filed applications, and the formal responses by attorneys, as well as estimated fees for filings. The Committee also discussed the current uses of ARRL logos, issues over the correct name and slogan, and the correct style on our name and slogan for trademarks.

The Committee was on break from 3:23 – 3:48 PM with all returning as noted except Mr. Famiglio.

9. Legal Structure Review Committee – Mr. Stratton

Mr. Stratton presented a review of the Committee’s report, including past and current filings, as well as comments from our CT Council. He explained that the Committee is currently reviewing the Articles of Amendment, By-Laws and Standing Orders, and will present their recommendations at the July Board meeting. Mr. Stratton added that the Committee recommends the Standing Orders be available to membership on the website, as the Articles and By-Laws are.

10. EmComm Committee Update – Mr. Hippisley

Mr. Hippisley presented a summary of the Committee's report with discussion including a change to the Committee's title/directive, a review of emergency communications equipment owned by the League at HQ and in the field, and the status of the ARES replacement software task team.

11. *Legislative Advocacy Committee – Mr. Stratton*

Mr. Stratton highlighted the LAC's report, stating that it contains the new draft of the HOA bill, as authorized and reviewed by the Board's attorneys. Mr. Stratton added that the Committee is working with the League's lobbying firm, and they will update the Board at its July meeting.

12. *Other Business*

On the motion of Mr. Carlson, seconded by Mr. Stratton, the group moved into a Committee of the Whole from 4:29 – 5:31 PM.

13. On the motion of Mr. Abernethy, seconded by Mr. Williams, the report of the Committee of the Whole was APPROVED.

14. *Life Members*

Mr. Minster shared the New Life Member report with the Committee.

On the motions of Mr. Abernethy, seconded by Mr. Carlson, the new Life Members were APPROVED (with applause).

15. The Committee confirmed their next meeting for July 7, 2021 at 11:00 AM EDT.

16. There being no further business, on the motion of Mr. Hippisley, seconded by Mr. Williams, the meeting was adjourned at 5:42 PM.