

Champlain Regional Repeater Association
Meeting of the Members & Executive

November 10, 2021

7 p.m. via Zoom (continued distancing due to COVID-19)

Present: Greg VE3ECI (Chair), Tim VA3PYC (Zoom host & note taker), James VE3KAW, Robert VA3AGN, Allen VE3JGU, Phil VE3HOA, Graham VE3AMN, Ed VA3EJT, Matt VA3KXA, Alan VA3IAH, Frank VE3YY, Curt VE3ZN, Bob VE3YX, Cristian VA3CTQ, Stefan VA3STQ, Larry VE3KLJ

Regrets: None

Absent: Randy VA3RKS

(Note: Only the Executive members are noted in terms of regrets or absence)

The agenda for the meeting was circulated via email.

Agenda

1. Review previous executive meeting minutes - VA3PYC Tim
2. Membership and Finances - VE3KAW James
3. Groups.io possibilities - VA3IAH Alan
4. Web domain and ISP changes - VE3ECI Greg in GMZ's absence
5. ARES direction - Don VE3PM
6. VE3YYX status - Randy VA3RKS
7. Project updates:
 - STP2 VHF FM performance progress - Phil VE3HOA
 - STP2 VHF DMR future direction - Phil VE3HOA & Graham VE3AMN
 - STP2 Remote Access/Control - Greg VE3ECI & Phil VE3HOA
 - STP2 VHF FM RPI based EchoLink - Allen VE3JGU & Greg VE3ECI
8. Social events - Plan for next year New business:

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 p.m. Greg VE3ECI reviewed the agenda. All were in agreement with the agenda as presented.

Meeting Minutes

1. Review previous executive meeting minutes - VA3PYC Tim
Moved VA3PYC, seconded VE3ECI, that the previous meeting minutes be accepted as submitted.
Passed unanimously.
2. Membership and Finances - VE3KAW James
James VE3KAW asked about VE3LBO's contribution. Greg VE3ECI explained that this was for membership and a generous donation. James is now setting up

for membership renewals for early 2022. \$3049.36 is the current bank balance. James noted that when we do compensation for payments made by members, there is a service fee of \$1.50. As far as other income, James reported that we received \$0.67 in interest ☺ Greg noted that we have an upcoming insurance premium of approximately \$500.00 coming up.

3. Groups.io possibilities - VA3IAH Alan

Alan VA3IAH suggested that Groups.io might be useful for our communications. It's a way to share photos or other materials. It also works as a mailing list, and it could attract other members. Similar options are Freelists and Google groups. Curt VE3ZN noted that he uses these groups for many radio-related activities, and he noted that we would need an administrator. Greg VE3ECI asked what he thought of using these groups, and Curt noted that they are useful for things like groups focused on a particular radio. Alan noted that this is meant to augment existing communication channels. Frank VE3YY also belongs to various Groups.io, and he commented that he finds these groups useful. Frank then asked about our existing web service. Greg noted we do have our own website, *champlainrepeater.ca*, which migrated from VE3STP.org that VE3KEG had created. Phil VE3HOA noted that the nightly net serves a daily function of keeping members in touch, so an online meeting place may not be as important for our group. James VE3KAW noted that even though he is technologically focused, he doesn't use these groups. Tim VA3PYC noted that a larger group is typically more successful with this sort of resource, such as what VE3ZN noted with a group focused on his radio. He also suggested group emails may be just as effective for our small group. Cristian VA3CTQ noted that WordPress has some functionality with OwnCloud for sharing larger files. Robert VA3AGN commented that the FMT frequency measuring test was a Yahoo group and he wondered what happened to it. Alan noted that these groups were closed on Yahoo. Curt VE3ZN added that he believed this content is gone now. Bob VE3YX directed Robert to the new location for this resource.

ACTION: Greg closed off the discussion by suggesting that we not move forward with Groups.io at the moment.

4. Web domain and ISP changes - VE3ECI Greg in GMZ's absence

Greg VE3ECI noted that we still have the *ve3stp.org* web page active, but when people visit it, the information is out of date. For whatever reason, we've kept that. The association doesn't own it, Steve VE3STP does. Greg would like to ask that this be removed. Matt VA3KXA noted that this could simply be forwarded to *champlainrepeater.ca*. James VE3KAW noted that Steve VE3KEG has maintained it because it has content on it that was not migrated. Frank VE3YY supported the forwarding suggestion from *ve3stp.org* to *champlainrepeater.ca*.

ACTION: Greg will speak with Steve about forwarding more effectively.

Greg noted that Jim VA3GMZ has left the province, but he has agreed to maintain the repeater, *champlainrepeater.ca*. Although he has agreed to do this for the time being, we'll need to find someone to take this over from Jim. James VE3KAW underscored Jim's commitment to continuity, but James agreed that we will eventually need a more local web administrator.

ACTION: Matt VA3KXA is considering taking on this role.

5. ARES direction - Don VE3PM
Don VE3PM was absent.

6. VE3YYX status - Randy VA3RKS
Randy VA3RKS was absent.

7. Project updates:

- STP2 VHF FM performance progress - Phil VE3HOA
Phil VE3HOA noted that the repeater has been running well. There is less noise, and this may be due to recent work on the filter system. Phil cleaned coupling loops and connections, and he worked to choke out adjacent signals.

Matt VA3KXA noted he got a full S9 with the repeater, and Curt VE3ZN concurred that the signal is much better, as did Frank VE3YY.

- STP2 VHF DMR future direction - Phil VE3HOA & Graham VE3AMN
There is some bench work that could be done this winter on the DMR system, but as yet we're not ready to move the DMR repeater connection further. Phil may bring it home to do some of this work. Greg noted that this part of the project is for 2022.
- STP2 Remote Access/Control - Greg VE3ECI & Phil VE3HOA
Phil received a power controller, Raspberry Pi based, but he has yet to work on it. Greg agreed that we should wait on this until the spring.
- STP2 VHF FM RPI based EchoLink - Allen VE3JGU & Greg VE3ECI
Phil also spoke to the Echolink project might be a priority. It takes up a lot of rack space. Not sure what the issues are with this system, but Phil thinks that this should be his focus right now.

Greg called on Allen VE3JGU to address where we are with Echolink. Allen had found some software for the Raspberry out of Sweden last winter. He tried to get it going with his own radio at home. He has it so it registers with the Echolink server, but he had problems with the audio

through his radio. He was not sure just what the problem was (software, hardware connection with radio?). This created a roadblock to the project, and this combined with a family needs stopped work on the project. Allen's intention is to pick this project back up in a month or so.

Graham VE3AMN asked about the state of the interfaces between the Raspberry Pi and the sound card. He commented about the challenges on getting the Raspberry Pi software to work, but he thinks he can help with the Echolink port to the audio. Graham volunteered to help Allen with the project. A short discussion followed about some of the aspects that need to be addressed, but these details were beyond the scope of the meeting. VE3EJT offered to help as well because he has professional experience in this area. They hope to do some of this bench work over the winter.

Phil suggested that he could pick up a new router now for this set up. Ed Both Tim VA3PYC and James VE3KAW were in support of this purchase. However, Graham VE3AMN and Frank VE3YY both offered routers, so no purchase is necessary at this time.

8. Social events - Plan for next year
Tabled because of continuing COVID issues.
9. New business:
James VA3KAW suggested that we have 3 meetings per year rather than 4.
James moved that we change our meeting schedule to every 4 months. Phil seconded it.

Passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.