

Champlain Regional Repeater Association
Annual General Meeting 2024

May 29, 2024
7 p.m. via Zoom

Present: Greg VE3ECI (Chair), Ed VA3EJT (1st Vice President), Alan VA3IAH (2nd Vice President), Phil VE3HOA (Technical Director), Robert VA3AGN (Net Manager), Tim VA3PYC (Secretary & Zoom host), Bill VE3TUC, Bob VE3YX, Ron VE3RKB, Larry VE3KLJ, Alan VE3VTT, Graham VE3AMN, Sandy VE3AAC

The agenda for the meeting was circulated via email in advance of the meeting.

Agenda

Call Meeting to Order

Review 2023 AGM Minutes: Tim VA3PYC

Announce - by acclamation the CRRRA executive board: Greg VE3ECI

Review & vote on revised CRRRA ONCA compliant Bylaws: Alan VA3IAH Executive

Reports:

1. President's & Treasurer's Report: Greg VE3ECI
2. Net Manager's Report: Robert VA3AGN
3. Technical Report: Ed VA3EJT & Phil VE3HOA
4. WebMaster Report: Cristian VA3CTQ

New Business:

1. VARA FM: Tim VA3PYC
2. VE3JA radio equipment donation

Round Table Members Input

The meeting began at 7:13 p.m.

Greg began with a welcome and by asking everyone in attendance to identify themselves.

Greg presented the agenda, and Tim VA3PYC requested another item for new business be added entitled "VE3JA's donation to the CRRRA."

Motion to accept the agenda as amended (Tim, Robert)

Passed unanimously.

Review of the minutes – outstanding business from previous meetings

Tim VA3PYC noted that a variety of technical updates were presented at the 2022 and 2023 AGM, some of which we will revisit tonight. One issue that warrants continued attention that was noted in last year's minutes as well as in 2022 and 2021 pertains to membership. As Greg noted in 2021, "Membership is stable but stagnant. Without donations we would have a tough time paying the bills. We need a vision for realistic growth." In sum, a review of the minutes from the past few Annual General Meetings reveals a focus on technical issues with STP that will be further addressed tonight as well as continued financial concerns particularly given the possible need to replace the antenna for STP.

Motion to accept the minutes of the past meeting as posted. (Bill, Ron)

Discussion: None

Motion to accept the minutes of the 2023 AGM passed unanimously.

Review & vote on revised CRRA ONCA compliant Bylaws: Alan VA3IAH Executive

Alan VA3IAH provided an overview of the amended bylaws for CRRA. He carefully walked through the various revisions required with explanation.

Bob VE3YX briefly discussed the issue of classes of membership based on his experience with the Renfrew County Amateur Radio Club.

Ron VE3RKB asked about how the accumulated equipment of the CRRA is inventoried or if it is. Bill VE3TUC followed up asking about key control in terms of access to the repeater site and the equipment. Greg VE3ECI replied that no specific process is in place, but the Executive is responsible for the equipment and keys as these are operational issues, not issues that are addressed by Bylaws.

Ron VE3RKB moved that the revised by-laws be accepted as amended with the removal of two classes of membership in favour of 1 membership class, because all members whether they be paid-up regular members or honorary members have 1 vote. Graham VE3AMN seconded the motion.

Motion passed: 11 (eleven) in favour, 1 (one) abstention.

Executive Reports:**1. President's Report - Greg VE3ECI****Highlights**

- CRRR ONCA Bylaws – Greg thanked VA3IAH Alan, VA3PYC Tim, and VA3EJT Ed for their work on revising the Bylaws as required.
- Greg briefly addressed the ongoing efforts to isolate the phantom crackle on the STP repeater and thanked VE3HOA Phil & VA3EJT Ed for their ongoing efforts to resolve this (more of this below in the Technical Director's report).
- Greg noted that we attempted running Allstar on VE3STP VHF, however this did not go very well, and it was removed. The XLX197 reflector connection was problematic because our audio was very poor. The audio annoyed others on the reflector.
- The *champlainrepeater.ca* webmaster is now - VA3CTQ Cristian. Greg thanked Cristian for taking on this responsibility. Unfortunately, he was unable to attend this AGM.
- Greg noted the completion of the STP2 power re-work by VE3AMN Graham & VA3EJT Ed (they are waiting rectifier parts). Graham explained more specifically the problem with the rectifiers and remarked that Ed did most of the work on this project.
- Net Control coverage. Greg spoke to the commitment of the net controllers with particular emphasis to those making an effort to “filling in the gaps” when net controllers are away. Special thanks again to Ron VE3RKB who has done many extra nets throughout the past year, as well as two nights weekly (Monday and Saturday)
- Greg informed members about the standby VE3STP VHF FM repeater (STP3) built by Phil and Ed. Currently at HOA's QTH. See report below by Ed VA3EJT and the photograph on page 6.

Going Forward

- Greg explained that we are fairly certain that we will need to purchase and install a new VHF antenna for STP2, so we will need to raise funds and consider the following:
 - a. Define antenna options and pricing
 - b. Identify a climber for installation
 - c. Consider other tower work while tower climber is working.
 - Greg noted that we now need to submit the approved CRRR Bylaws to provincial government.
 - Finally, Greg encouraged members to consider club executive positions, explaining that we have had no interest expressed, and we still lack a Treasurer (which Greg is fulfilling at the moment). The current executive has been acclaimed for their next term.
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2. *2023 AGM Treasurers Report Greg VE3ECI (Acting Treasurer)*

Financials May 2023 to May 2024

- Balance May 2023 - \$2973.43
- Balance May 2024 - \$2587.19

- Income - May 2024 - 941.16 (May 2023 \$1158.2)
 - \$490 Memberships 10 - renewals since Jan 1, 2024
 - \$440 Donations
 - \$10 Adjustment
 - \$1.16 Interest

- Expenses - \$1352.40
 - \$469.52 Club Insurance
 - \$425.26 VE3STP2 battery and fuses
 - \$9.00 Interac Send Fees
 - \$236.27 power pole connectors and 2 distribution panels.
 - \$74.87 - 4 x 20A @ \$13.79 (High current relays) 1x 30A @ \$11.10 (PIs via power pole)
 - \$100 Donation via RAC to Defend Amateur Radio Fund DARF
- 27 Members in good standing (AGM to AGM) - 3 Lifetime Members

Financial Outlook

RAC Insurance Calculation

	2024 Submission	Non RAC Cost	RAC Cost	Outlook
RAC Fixed Fee	\$220.00	\$220.00	\$220.00	\$220.00
Affiliate Fee	\$27.95	\$27.95	\$27.95	\$27.95
Cost per head	\$1.25	\$1.25	\$1.25	\$1.25
Non RAC Member	\$13.00	\$13.00	\$13.00	\$13.00
Club Members	34	34	34	26
Non RAC	11	34	0	11
AVG cost per head	\$12.75	\$21.54	\$8.54	\$16.29

+ Tax

Referring to the table above, Greg explained that a family membership is not viable because we pay more towards RAC insurance for these members than we collect for membership.

Greg then summarized a few key conclusions:

1. Club operational expense NOT sustainable without donations. Recommend retiring family membership (at least for non-RAC members). Larry VE3KLJ asked whether we might “grandfather in” existing family members because we are trying to expand membership? Although we would be running at a loss, this may

be appropriate for the short term. Ultimately, it is not good financially for the CRRRA.

2. New VE3STP2 Antenna will be beyond budget – We will need to fund raise.
3. VE3ECI will remain acting Treasurer until someone is willing to fill an executive position.

3. *Net Manager Report – Robert VA3AGN*

No report at this time. Greg commented that it would good to have broad descriptive summaries of the net activities in terms of the number of check-ins, length of sessions, etc.

Greg raised the question if the format of the net is appropriate? A short discussion followed with attendees and net controllers expressing support for the current format, but understanding that some operators may not prefer the longer nets. The executive will discuss this further at an upcoming meeting.

4. *Technical Director Report – Ed VA3EJT*

VE3STP Signal Interference

Ed explained that he and Phil have put an incredible amount of time into this issue. It is one of the most serious issues we've faced in the recent past. Ed then summarized key points below.

Interference Monitoring and Testing

- All radio equipment replaced more than once.
- Monitored 60+ active signals from 140 to 160 MHz for Intermodulation (IM) interference using an SDR over a 2 month period.
- Monitored 5 frequencies predicted to cause IM interference when combined with 147.060 into 146.460 MHz over the same period.
- Recorded Net signal levels, weather conditions and noise events over 5 weeks. Detected no obvious patterns.
- Interference continues after changing the transmitter frequency to 147.660 MHz.

Interim Conclusion

- Source of noise is most likely our antenna. Possibly loose or broken antenna or transmission cable mounts.

Actions

- Testing at VE3H0A site to be completed. (Delayed due to Echolink technical issues.)
- Testing ay STP1 site with a different antenna.
- Investigate options to replace the antenna array.

Phil VE3HOA added that they are confident that it's nothing going on inside the bungalow. All that's left is to replace the antenna. The repeater will be operational for quite some time yet, and the antenna on the tower now is quite old. The Sinclair antennas are wonderful but, of course, they do fail. Given Rolland's willingness to do this for us, we should have new equipment to install so as not to have to do this again. Phil also noted that he would like to put another antenna at the top of the tower (simple amateur-grade antenna) for testing and perhaps for some redundancy. Finally, Phil added that Ed VA3EJT has installed a new UHF repeater at Site 1. The newest feature of this repeater is its power management system. It is able to shut down in the evening when solar power not available, but will wake if someone closes the squelch. It doesn't get a lot of traffic at this point. Phil noted that they are thinking about moving it to Site 2 with an AllStar connection.

Portable STP3



Photograph above is the standby, portable repeater as a back-up for VE3STP.

5. *Webmaster Report – Cristian VA3CTQ*
Unfortunately, Cristian was unable to attend.

New Business

1. *VARA FM Winlink Gateway – Tim VA3PYC*
Tim made a brief presentation about the Winlink gateway he has put together. He noted that he might like to put together another gateway for VE3STP. Bob

- VE3YX noted that the VA3PYC-10 gateway and the recent VE2YG-10 gateway have been important additions for packet communications for the Ottawa Valley. He also noted that VE3OCE-10 and VE3BQP-10 (Ottawa EMRG packet repeaters) may be shutting down soon, so VA3PYC-10 connected to Starlink is an important asset for Winlink communications locally.
2. Tim VA3PYC reported that Rob VE3JA has left his radio equipment as a donation to the Almonte Amateur Radio Club and the CRRRA. We will need to work together to organize and prepare this equipment for sale at the Carp Hamfest in September. Phil VE3HOA noted that he will be going to the Carp Hamfest and offered to help transport items for sale to the site.

Round Table Members Input Adjourn Meeting

Members thanked the executive for the work completed over the past year. Larry VE3KLJ asked if we will be changing the offset on VE3STP back to a negative offset. Ed VA3EJT and Phil VE3HOA explained that it is best, all things considered, to leave the positive offset.

Alan VE3VTT thanked the club overall, the executive and offered compliments to the CRRRA for the continued operation of VE3STP as a crucial asset for radio communications in the Ottawa region.

Bill VE3TUC offered equipment for the CRRRA to sell for which he wants to donate the proceeds to the CRRRA. He suggested that we add his equipment to the sale at the Carp hamfest. Ron VE3RKB offered to pick up the equipment after a club breakfast in the near future.

Each member in attendance made short closing comments, typically words of thanks and expressions of gratitude for the work completed in terms of repeater maintenance and CRRRA administration.

Greg VE3ECI moved to adjourn, seconded by Tim VA3PYC. All in favour.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:43 p.m.