

## Minutes of the Florida Keys Amateur Radio Club Meeting

K4FLK

February 4, 2025

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM at the Big Pine United Methodist Church.

**Attendees:** K3OCM, KK4HG, K4VRZ, K1ST, WA4JSA, KQ4OOS, KQ4OOR, WB4FLA, KO4NTH, KA4PPM, K2JCU, K4HG, W8UF, KB7ZDO, W4KWS, WA4JFJ, WA4JFK, KN4TPR, KJ4PR,

**Via Zoom:** KG2CS, N1BGK, N8XX, KB1PA

**VE Testing at 6PM:** Duane Shelton, KQ4OOR, upgraded to General. Congratulations Duane!!! VEs were KK4HG, K3OCM and WA4JSA. K1ST coordinated the Test Session.

### Old Business:

The [minutes](#) of the January Club Meeting were approved. Motion made by WA4JFJ and seconded by KA2BYU and approved by voice vote.

Treasurer, WA4JFK reported we have 37 paid members for 2026. The Club currently has \$4,353.95 in the Treasury.

**Please consider joining/renewing your membership for 2026.** You can send a check to FKARC, 624 ASHE ST, KEY WEST, FL 33040-7111 or send a Zelle or Venmo payment to K1ST. Contact K1ST before sending funds. Annual dues are Twenty Dollars.

**Club Swag.** Greg, K4VRZ, will be coordinating the ordering of T Shirts for Club Members. Please keep in mind these are running small, are slightly fitted and are 100% cotton so they will shrink. They are also somewhat thin. K1ST has received his two shirts. They look Great!!! K1ST ordered 2XL shirts and they fit snugly. Normally, a 2XL shirt is very comfortable on me. K1ST will be selling these shirts (one Grey and one White) and you can see them at the next meeting.

Shirts will be \$30 each. They will be ordered in groups of four to get free shipping. No re-shipping. You must pay in advance. You'll need to pick them up at the next meeting or have someone pick them up for you. All sales will be final, no returns. Make sure you order the right size and color. Current Colors are Black, White, Grey and Heather Grey. Contact [K4VRZ](#) to make arrangements to purchase.

Link to VistaPrint for Color Selection:

<https://www.vistaprint.com/clothing-bags/t-shirts/district-r-very-important-tee-r-with-left-chest-and-back-print>



Wacky Award Diploma. Details at: <https://fkarc.net/wacky.htm>

The first number has already been claimed. The Certificate will be presented along with the special prize from W4KWS at the March Club Meeting.



APRS is operational once again in Key West. Contact [W4KWS](#) for details.

K1ST will be away for the March Club Meeting. I want to thank Michael, KO4NTH, for volunteering to run the March Club Meeting and K4HG to assist him.

New Business:

GMRS Repeater Status from KA2BYU.

**ORC GMRS Repeater is still under repair. Layton new cable installed the week of February 9<sup>th</sup>. All other GMRS Repeaters are operational. Working to also provide the Layton EOC with an HF Antenna.**

Ham Repeater Status from K1ST.

**The Ocean Reef UHF FM Repeater is back to full power as of February 11<sup>th</sup>.**

### **Grassy Key Tower VHF Repeater Antenna Installation**

**Antenna was installed February 6<sup>th</sup> at the 190 foot level on the tower (see picture below). The feedline is 7/8-inch HELIAX. An initial scan with my [FA-VA5](#) Vector Antenna Analyzer showed a 4 to 1 SWR. We plan to go back and apply RF Power to see what that does. We can also use [TDR](#) functionality in the FA-VA5 to see if we can identify any discontinuities in the feedline. Clamps had to be purchased to mount on the tower. Cost was \$385.03. K1ST will need to be reimbursed. The Invoice was emailed to the Treasurer.**



Work has progressed on remote access to the DMR Repeater sites. K1ST donated two Raspberry Pi4Bs to the project. They were installed at Stock Island and Ocean Reef. The two Chromebooks were installed at Grassy Key and Plantation Key. Marathon can be accessed via Chrome Remote Desktop at the EOC Radio Room. The Repeater Committee recommends installing Raspberry Pi4Bs at all seven DMR Repeater sites. A proposal will be made at the March Club Meeting.

The two Chromebooks will be repurposed for Exam Taking.

The Stock Island DMR Repeater has added NXDN and P25 capability for experimentation in the Key West area. This has been made possible by the new remote access capability. The Repeater Page on the Club Website has been updated to include the new functionality.

K1ST and the rest of the Repeater Committee would like to welcome KQ4IMK and KB7ZDO to the Repeater Committee. Keith, KB7ZDO, has been instrumental in the design and implementation of the remote access system. James, KQ4IMK, has been extremely helpful with the Ocean Reef and Key Largo Repeaters.

All the DMR Repeater callsigns were changed on February 17<sup>th</sup> from K1ST to K4FLK. The Repeaters are the Club's repeaters. Originally, we used the K1ST callsign as we didn't have easy control of the K4FLK callsign. K1ST is not going away. These changes are being made (along with remote access) to make it easier for more than just K1ST to control the Repeaters and make changes.

The current status of the Ham and GMRS Repeaters in the County can always be found on the [Repeaters Page](#) of the FKARC web site.

### **Ten Minute Break**

It was a short break...

### **Main Presentation:**

[Winter Field Day](#). Hot Wash (or Post Mortem)

Feedback was generally very positive. We had about thirty people attend WFD.

### **What went well:**

Delivery and initial setup of the tower trailer on Thursday made final antenna installation Saturday pretty quick.

The Food for lunch was very well received. Kudos to KN4GPN!!!

Many expressed that it was the best Field Day in recent memory.

**What could be improved:**

**Could always use more operators.**

**The Noise on 40 Meters was S9 plus 10-20 db making the band unusable. If we continue to use the site in the future we'll need to work to identify the noise sources and get the power company to fix them.**

**Need to complete setup the computers with the radios beforehand so we aren't scrambling to get the working the day of the event.**

**We advertised the event in QST and our Club email list but we should have an article in the Keys News to notify the general public.**

**Monroe EMA was invited to attend via email. Perhaps a face to face invite would further encourage them to stop by.**

**Finally, the Club gave out Awards to those that made significant contributions to the event:**

**To Austin Grimes, AB1Y, for the introduction of ham radio to three young men and with the hopes this award will further the exposure of radio to them, we award him this Prize Coupon for \$50 in ARRL books and other such resources.**

**To Mike Robinson, KO4NTH for his continuous support of Winter Field day every year providing physical and knowledgeable aid to the operation from the beginning to the last day of operations on site from Friday to Sunday, we award him this Prize Coupon for \$25 in ARRL books and other such resources.**

**Steve Nekhaila, KN4GPN, for his continuous and outstanding support for field day lunch and many other things, including bringing the youngest participant with him; we award him this Prize Coupon for \$25 in ARRL books and other such resources.**

**Thank you again to these individuals for their assistance.**

**Who wants to volunteer for the Marathon Seafood Festival? So far K4VRZ, AB1Y, K3OCM and who else? Let K4VRZ know.**

**Who wants to volunteer for the Seven Mile Bridge Run? K4VRZ & XYL, KM4VCR, K3OCM, KN4TPR, KO4NTH, KQ4IMK (tentative), KD4BJM & who else? You don't need a Ham License. We will also be on GMRS and a radio can be provided for GMRS or Ham frequencies.**

Barry Porter, KB1PA, ARRL Southern Florida Section Manager, attended out Club meeting via Zoom. **He also gave a short update to the Club on recent Hamfests in the section.**

**Major events for the 2025-2026 season include:**

Marathon Seafood Festival March 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup>

Seven Mile Bridge Run April 11<sup>th</sup>

ARRL Field Day? June 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup>

Any other events or activities we should be considering?

**Upcoming**

Next Ham Exam Test Sessions will be on Key West February 18th and Islamorada on February 21st. You must sign up in advance [here](#).

The next [Club Meeting](#) will be on March 4th and the topic is still being determined.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:44 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Shirley Perpall, Secretary