

Minutes of the Bluefield, WV's East River Amateur Radio Club meeting held on March 3, 2025
<http://www.erarc.com> Local emergency HF freq: 3.860+-5. We meet on the first Monday of each month at 7pm at 704 Bland Street, Room 523, Bluefield, WV 24701. Mailing address: P.O. Box 1362, Bluefield, WV 24701 (meeting delayed d/t bad weather)

President David Lester N8VFR, Vice President David Sexton AB8D, Treasurer; Jay Belt K8CTI, Secretary: George "Hooger" Fisher III W4OF, Webmaster, David Lester N8VFR, HamClubOnline liaison and VE team leader Berlon Roberts W8ZBR

The meeting was opened at 700pm by Dave Lester, ERARC President. He welcomed the other 12 in attendance. There were no participants via ZOOM tonight. The Group stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance. (Henry Shinn KC3KGY donated the flag, pole and stand.)

Hooger read the **minutes** of the January 6 meeting and they were accepted. The 'build a Ham Clock' session in February was commented upon.

Treasurer's report: Deposits included \$31.00 from renewals and donations. Paid was \$145.57 to Subway for lunch for the Blast Technician Class attendees. The Paypal account saw \$60 in renewals and donations. There was a fee debit of \$2.58. **We are accepting dues for the year. \$15/amateur, add \$5 for family members.** The PayPal link is on our www.HamclubOnline.com link.

Repeater report: Still working on a new digital frequency for the new Windmill Gap repeater and still plan on moving the 147.06 into Princeton on 'Radio Hill'. Discussion. The 145.49 and 147.06 CAN be linked. Henry Shinn KC3KGY commented on how the 147.06 is "shaded" to places that he frequents.

Volunteer Examiner: Berlon Roberts W8ZBR ERARC VEC. **The next session will be Saturday, May 10, 2025**, at 9am at 704 Bland St. Bluefield, WV, room 523. On February 13, there were 3 that tested and 1 passed their Technician exams. The Blast Technician Class testing session this past Saturday had 12 to test and 11 passed, including one that passed the General exam too. Berlon was in attendance. (The VE team must have a copy of your current license if applicable, a photo ID is a must as well as a copy of a CSCE, if applicable.) Those testing must have a FCC Registration Number and valid email address before testing. The cost is \$15 and we will accept cash and check but NO PLASTIC. The new FCC \$35 federal licensing fee must be paid to the FCC, NOT THE ERARC. (<https://www.fcc.gov/wireless/support/universal-licensing-system-uls-resources/getting-fcc-registration-number-frn>) The VE team tests quarterly on the second Saturday in February, May, August and November.)

SKYWARN (Matt Morris KC8LGS) Net is on the first Monday of the month) at 7pm on 145.49. The ARES net is on the third Thursday of each month at 730pm on 145.49.

DMR net by David Sexton AB8D: (Net is every Tuesday at 0730pm on the W8MOP 444.45 DMR repeater on the 3154 WV statewide talk group.)

Old Business: Hooger asked about the roofing replacement that has yet to be performed at 704 Bland St. David has no news about that. It was suggested that we connect the VHF / UHF radios to dual band magnetic mount antennas in the radio room so that they are at least functional. David

Sexton has two such antennas and will let the Club use them until the roof antennas can be restored. Discussion about an HF end-fed antenna. Harold Hodges N8NCP has a 9:1 balun that we can use until the HF antenna systems are back in service on the roof. Discussion. Jay Belt has 500' of wire, Harold has the balun and **next month, the project will be to make a 130' end-fed antenna that can be dropped out a window and get our HF back on the air.** Gary Kadar mentioned that we could use the old 145.49 repeater controller and use it and a radio and duplexers to make a display in the Clubhouse.

Field Day was mentioned. David asked Jay Belt if the airport was still available for FD. He said yes. Discussion. David asked that we think about the event as June will be here before we know it.

New business: David has a friend that wants to sell two 4K 32" monitors and stands for \$100. We can use these in the radio room and really open the visual effect up for the comms. They sell for \$280 new. Discussion. Gary Kadar made a motion, seconded by Brennen McGraw K8BDM to purchase the monitor screens. A vote was taken, the motion passed.

Gary suggested that we look into purchasing a 72" TV for the front of the room. Dave: there is already a projector screen at the front. Discussion. David said that a projector for the screen would be a lot cheaper and he will look into pricing and get back with the membership.

Henry Shinn took the floor and announced that he, the Moncalm, WV Fire Dept, and others have incorporated **THE MERCER COUNTY OFF-ROAD RESPONSE TEAM** as an emergency service supplier with the State of West Virginia as of January 13, 2025. It is a non-profit organization to assist our local first responders. Mission statement: "Our primary mission is to supplement the local emergency services with off-road vehicle support. We will provide transportation, reporting and general assistance to the emergency services. We will stay committed to our community during the times of need." The organization's primary problem right now is communications. Henry is maybe the only licensed Ham in the group and they rely on GMRS, cell, etc. although there are lots of areas that have no cell or GMRS coverage. He is asking the Club for our expertise in suggesting possible alternatives. The group is to meet with 911, Keith Gunnoe, Mercer County Emergency Management, and others on Friday. Since the group is incorporated with the State and has the blessing of Keith Gunnoe, Hooger suggested that the group ask for tower space at the Windmill Gap 911 tower site. Henry is looking at \$1000 for a GMRS repeater. Discussion. David Sexton mentioned the 147.03 repeater on Herndon mountain may help with coverage on the Ham side of comms. Discussion. <https://www.facebook.com/>

Search: The Mercer County Off-Road Response Team

Hooger thanked all involved with the recent Blast Technician Class. Another success for Ham Radio.

The meeting was over around 0815pm.