Pentagon Amateur Radio Club

Meeting Minutes, 8 Jul 2026

Attendees:

Pentagon: Ron Startzel KB5LNC, Dennis Wilson KD4WGN, Hugh Katz K3HU, Steven Karty N5SK, Doug Donnell KD4MD, Nate Lauterback N0PCL, Claude Hennessey W4AT, Sean Gallagher K4KBK, Stefano Fonda K4IEW, Cynthia Kellams KJ4CLK, David Trachtenberg N9WWL, Rui Amaral K0RUI, Rae Ohlert N5VFR

Zoom: Didn't capture the names

The meeting was called to order at noon and led by Ron. Our general purpose of this and the following several meetings will be organizing the club and assigning duties following the passing of Gary Sessums, SK, our ad hoc president for many years.

The following will be an update on items from last month's meeting combined with items brought up this month. This should serve as a basic list of action items moving forward and future meeting minutes will be structured in a more traditional format.

Cynthia has created an accurate spreadsheet of dues paying members (closed).

Badge renewal – these were processed and members have received their badges. Ron pointed out that if a badge holder does not swipe in for 90 consecutive days his/her access will be terminated. Note: unlike badges issued in previous years which specified escort privileges on the badge, the new badges grant escort privileges unless specifically ("no escort") is listed on the badge, hence our badges include escort privileges (closed).

Some new badges do not open the room. Ron will work with PFPA to get these loaded. Members should forward their badge numbers to Ron (open, Ron action)

Field day – We weren't able to secure proper permission to use the Pentagon Reservation location. Thanks to Joe for getting an alternate location. We will try to return to the Pentagon location next year (closed).

Email list and website – Doug has updated the website and has (hopefully) gotten the email list straightened out. He has sent an email to everyone on the list and will cut those that have not responded (Open, Doug action).

Trustee – Ron volunteered to be trustee for K4AF and the repeater, although details will have to be addressed. Sean will assist as he has recently gone through the process and knows the procedure. Cynthia also agreed to help. (no update, open item)

Rae asked about taking an inventory. We will go through the room and get rid of excess items at some time in the future (tabled, to be scheduled for some undetermined future time)

QSL information: Claude has answered all pending QSLs. Doug brought a new logbook to be used for HF contacts outside of special events. Claude will use that to keep track of future QSL requests.

Sean brought up the possibility of a Celebration of Life honoring Gary Sessums to be held at the Columbia Island Marina in concert with local amateur radio clubs, the Fairlington Social Club, and Shirlington Running Club. More to follow. Cynthia will act as a POC to gather photos of Gary for inclusion in the program. Send photos to her. (no action at this meeting, open item)

There was a discussion about a dedication of the station (perhaps a plaque) to Gary & Gene Kaiser for their considerable contributions to the club. Open item for further discussion at a future time. (no action at this meeting, open item)

There was some open discussion about the basis for the station. It's officially a MARS station and the "rent" for the square footage is paid by the Air Force, likely stemming from our time as an MWR sponsored club. Undoubtedly, the official status of the club and station with regards to the DoD and Air Force missions requires more work leading to a definitive statement of mission and purpose. (Action deferred).

Upcoming we need to review by-laws and elect a new slate of officers. We will address at next meeting. Ron handed out copies of the existing by-laws which members can review. Doug stated that these are undoubtedly from a time when the club was chartered under Air Force MWR which is no longer the case. A committee will be formed in the future to come up with new by-laws. (open item)

Hugh has updated T-MARK with Ron as trustee. (item closed)

We need to get further information on the repeater located at the WETA tower. (Doug will follow up).

Need to have a POC and update the QRZ page. Claude said that any update should indicate that QSLs should be sent directly to the PO Box. At this time, we are not doing electronic QSLs. (Doug took for action).

We need written instructions for using the station's equipment, so members know how to do patching between radios and antennas (open item, no action POC at this time).

DISA donated two new vertical antennas which are now in the shack. We'll have to install at some future time (open item, no action POC at this time).

Nobody knows about the STU-III phones or the safe combo. (open)

The phone in the room is not working. Ron will follow up (Ron action).

Vote was taken on holding a 25th anniversary of 9/11 special event. Consensus was to operate for 12 hours on Friday, Sept 11. Claude will take the lead but will need help. Several volunteered to be available for helping with organization (Action: Claude)

There was a discussion about the status of the station as an official MARS entity. The MARS callsigns (including WAR) are assigned to the station and are valid for use by the station on authorized government frequencies. Rui gave a summary of what is involved in joining MARS. Dave (N9WWL) talked about MARS nets, frequencies, etc and will talk to the DoD CIO about a possible official MARS role for the station. A considerable amount of work needs to be done here. Mike from the NY MARS region has agreed to help with organizing the MARS function. We should have more MARS trained operators and need a new MARS trustee. This is an action item for a future time (no assigned POC at this time).

The meeting was adjourned at 1308.

Respectfully submitted,

Doug Donnell KD4MD