

Minutes of the Executive Committee, Number 479

MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Number 479

St. Louis, Missouri -- March 11, 2006

Pursuant to due notice, the Executive Committee of The American Radio Relay League, Inc. met at 8:30 AM CST, Saturday, March 11, 2006 at the St. Louis Airport Marriott, St. Louis, Missouri. Present were the following committee members: President Joel Harrison, W5ZN; First Vice President Kay C. Craigie, N3KN; Chief Executive Officer and Secretary David Sumner K1ZZ; and Directors Coy Day, N5OK, Frank Fallon, N2FF, George R. Isely, W9GIG, Warren G. "Rev" Morton, WS7W and Wade Walstrom, WØEJ. Also present were Vice President Rick Roderick, K5UR, International Affairs Vice President Rod Stafford, W6ROD, and General Counsel Christopher D. Imlay, W3KD.

1. The following agenda as previously circulated was agreed:

1. Consideration of agenda for the meeting.
2. Report on Washington advocacy.
3. FCC ET Docket No. 04-37 (BPL): Review of current status of technical and regulatory/policy efforts to address interference issue, including the inadequacies of the "publicly accessible" database.
4. Review of draft petition re: automatic power control of spread spectrum transmissions (Minute 50, January 2006 Board Meeting).
5. Status of pending FCC items.
6. Report of Grassroots Legislative Action Committee.
7. Band planning process: Consideration of plan for addressing the need for an effective process for the review and revision of band plans.
8. Review of additional action items.
9. International matters.
10. Media and publications matters: Report on "Hello" campaign.
11. National Frequency Coordinators' Council, Inc. (NFCC).
12. Antenna and RFI cases.
13. Convention matters: Approval of conventions; report on ARRL EXPO plans for Dayton Hamvention.
14. Affiliation of clubs.
15. Recognition of new Life Members.
16. Approval of minutes of October 22, 2005 meeting.
17. Other business.

2. Mr. Harrison referred to his written report, which included a summary of the ARRL's Washington advocacy efforts.

2.1. At the FCC, the ARRL is urging action in WT Docket No. 04-140, a relatively uncontroversial Part 97 Omnibus proceeding in which the release of a Report and Order terminating the proceeding is long overdue. Next in line is a Report and Order in WT Docket No. 05-235, the proceeding in which the FCC has proposed to eliminate the Morse code requirement

for all amateur licensing. The comment period is closed on the ARRL's petition to regulate subbands by emission bandwidth, RM-11306; it remains to be seen whether the FCC will issue a Notice of Proposed Rule Making based on the petition. At its March 17 meeting the FCC is expected to adopt an Order reorganizing the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau and creating a Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau. The committee discussed ways to educate the ever-changing FCC staff on Amateur Radio's role in public service and disaster communications.

2.2. A meeting of the ARRL's "Washington Team" was held February 16 at the offices of Chwat & Co. to review strategy, particularly with regard to legislative goals. House Resolution 230 concerning Broadband over Power Line (BPL) interference is presently the principal focus. Efforts in support of H.Res. 230 have been successful in educating key Congressional offices about the issue but have not netted new co-sponsors. Of the bills that are of direct interest to the ARRL, H.R. 691 has 33 sponsors and co-sponsors; H.R. 3876, 11; H. Res. 230, 7; and S. 1236, 7.

3. Mr. Imlay reviewed the status of pending complaints filed with the FCC in response to interference from BPL experienced by amateurs and problems with the "publicly accessible" BPL database maintained by the United Telecom Council and the United Power Line Council. The FCC finally responded to the ongoing interference in Manassas, VA, ordering the City of Manassas to investigate one of several documented complaints of interference and requesting additional information from other complainants. The Briarcliff Manor, NY BPL site operated by Ambient Corporation continues to pollute the radio spectrum in that community. Visits to the site by ARRL laboratory personnel have documented repeated violations of the FCC emissions limits, but no enforcement action has been forthcoming; a further complaint is in preparation. The FCC also has not acted on our Petition for Further Rule Making, filed on October 18, 2005, which cites information developed since the release of the Report and Order in ET Docket No. 04-37 in support of additional amendments of the FCC Part 15 rules.

Mr. Imlay submitted comments on behalf of the ARRL to the New York State Public Service Commission in a proceeding to examine issues related to BPL deployment. The comments note that the PSC is concerned with reliability, and that BPL is an inherently unreliable medium in that it may be required to cease operation at any time in the likely event that harmful interference is caused to a radiocommunication service.

4. A draft petition prepared by Mr. Imlay in response to Minute 50 of the January 2006 Board Meeting was reviewed. The petition seeks amendment of §97.311(d) of the FCC Rules concerning spread spectrum emissions. On motion of Mr. Day, the General Counsel was authorized to file the petition with the FCC.

5. The status of pending FCC items was reviewed as follows:

5.1. Mr. Imlay has contacted FCC staff responsible for implementing the "Nationwide Programmatic Agreement for Review Under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966" (NPA). The NPA places no new obligations on amateur licensees and should streamline the process should a licensee be required to take actions under §97.13(a) of the Commission's Rules. Mr. Imlay is preparing a memorandum on the subject for dissemination to concerned members.

5.2. On April 4, 2005 the ARRL filed an application for an Experimental license on behalf of a group of radio amateurs interested in experimenting with propagation at 500 kHz. The application is awaiting clearance by federal agencies.

5.3. No FCC action has been taken on an ARRL petition filed February 25, 2005 seeking a Declaratory Ruling that a Florida statute directed against pirate radio broadcasting is preempted by the Communications Act. Similar legislation has been signed into law in New Jersey. An amended petition addressing the New Jersey law is to be filed shortly.

5.4. Anticipated problems with the initial wave of FCC Vanity Call Sign renewals that will occur later this year were discussed. On motion of Mr. Isely, staff was directed to develop a plan for providing a renewal service to ARRL members.

5.5. An application has been filed for Special Temporary Authority for a single amateur station operated by a member of the ARRL HSMM Working Group to experiment with data and image transmission of up to 200 kHz bandwidth in the band 50.3-50.8 MHz.

5.6. ARRL Alabama Section Manager Greg Sarratt, W4OZK appeared before the FCC's Independent Panel Reviewing the Impact of Hurricane Katrina on Communications Networks on March 7 in Jackson, Mississippi. He recounted his experiences and those of other Amateur Radio operators in responding to the Katrina communications emergency.

5.7. ARRL filed comments opposing the granting of a waiver to Octatron, Inc. and Chang Industry, Inc. that would permit the marketing of a device that does not conform to Part 15 emissions limits in the 902-928 MHz band. Several other organizations and companies also filed in opposition. FCC action is pending.

5.8. A Notice of Proposed Rule Making related to the multilateration Location and Monitoring Service operating in portions of the 902-928 MHz band was just released; Mr. Imlay will review the document and recommend ARRL action.

5.9. ARRL is working to build federal agency support for a relaxation of some of the restrictions on amateur operation in the vicinity of 5 MHz.

6. Mr. Fallon reported for the Grassroots Legislative Action Committee. The committee is working with other Board members to identify obstacles to effective grassroots action by ARRL members in support of ARRL legislative goals. The committee believes additional visibility is needed on the ARRL Web site and in electronic newsletters, and is developing a flow chart as guidance for Web development. Additional material should be provided to Directors for use in making in-person presentations to legislators and their district staffs.

The committee was in recess for lunch from 11:51 AM to 1:06 PM.

7. Mr. Roderick distributed draft terms of reference for an ARRL MF/HF Band Planning Committee. The document responded to the need to develop a sound process for HF band planning, with broad participation by the amateur community, in the near term as discussed at

Minute 37 of the January 2006 Board Meeting. After discussion, it was agreed that a final draft incorporating the comments made would be circulated to the Executive Committee for a mail vote.

8. The committee reviewed a list of pending action items from past Board meetings. On motion of Mr. Fallon, the committee's earlier recommendation to the Board to rescind the instruction (at Minute 47 of the July 2001 Board Meeting) to petition for unattended beacons in narrow segments of the 160-meter band was reaffirmed. The Secretary will update the list to reflect comments and recent actions, and will distribute it to the Board.

9. Mr. Stafford reported briefly on international matters. Updating his comprehensive report to the Board at its January meeting, he noted that IARU Region 2 had participated in a CITEL Assembly in San Jose, Costa Rica to promote IARU WRC-07 objectives.

10. Mr. Sumner reported that the "Hello..." public relations campaign is ready for launch. The campaign is featured in the April issue of *QST*. A dedicated Web site will be activated on March 15.

11. Mr. Isely reported on recent activity of the National Frequency Coordinators' Council, Inc. (NFCC). NFCC's organizational difficulties appear to have been straightened out. It was agreed that the review of the Memorandum of Understanding between the ARRL and NFCC can be closed out.

12. Mr. Imlay reported briefly on an amateur antenna case in Baltimore County, Maryland that is presently at the administrative stage, but litigation may be necessary to defend a building permit granted to the amateur. He also noted complaints of interference lodged by amateurs and others against a broadcasting station in Ferndale, Washington.

13. Convention matters.

13.1. On motion of Mr. Morton, the holding of the following ARRL conventions was approved:

2006

Southeastern VHF Society Conference, April 28-29, Greenville, SC

EMCOMMWEST 2006, May 6-7, Reno, NV

Wyoming Section, May 26-28, Casper

Georgia State, June 3, Marietta

Montana State, July 14-16, East Glacier

Alabama Section, August 19-20, Huntsville

Western Pennsylvania Section, September 10, Butler

Roanoke Division, September 16-17, Virginia Beach, VA

Louisiana State, November 11, Monroe

South Carolina State, November 11, Conway

2007

Pacific Division, October 19-21, San Ramon, CA

13.2. Mr. Sumner reported briefly on plans for ARRL EXPO at the 2006 Dayton Hamvention. Dayton is not an ARRL National Convention this year.

14. On motion of Mr. Isely, affiliation of the following clubs was approved:

Category 1

Bastrop County Amateur Radio Club, Smithville, TX
Carroll County Contesters, Sykesville, MD
Driftless Area Amateur Radio Service, Prairie du Chien, WI
Prince George's Amateur Radio Club of Maryland, Hyattsville, MD
Radio Operators Association of Dallas, Dallas, OR
Terrain Wireless Society, Luray, VA

Category 2

Colorado QRP Club, Golden, CO
Valley Emergency Radio Association, Camarillo, CA

Category 3

Northeast Middle School Amateur Radio Club, Kansas City, MO
University of St. Thomas Radio Club, St. Paul, MN
W6MHS Moorpark High School Amateur Radio Club, Moorpark, CA

The ARRL now has the following numbers of active affiliated clubs: Category 1, 1833; Category 2, 48; Category 3, 110; Category 4, 19; Total, 2010.

15. On motion of Mr. Day, 66 recently elected life members were recognized and the Secretary was instructed to list their names in *QST*.

16. On motion of Mr. Isely, the minutes of the October 22, 2005 meeting were approved as distributed.

17. Other business.

17.1. Mrs. Craigie reported on the initial work of the Ad-Hoc ARRL National Emergency Response Planning Committee. She noted that a number of initiatives were occurring in parallel and that it was not necessary to wait until the committee's final report to the Board in January 2007 to implement improvements.

17.2. Mr. Fallon expressed his appreciation to Mr. Imlay for the comments filed by the ARRL in the previously mentioned New York State Public Service Commission proceeding. On his motion, Ed Hare, W1RFI and other staff members were thanked for their efforts that contributed

to the release by Motorola of a "White Paper" on BPL. The "White Paper" makes it clear that radio amateurs' concerns about radio interference from poorly implemented BPL systems are well founded.

17.3. The committee reviewed a candidacy for Section Manager in an upcoming election and concluded that no committee action is indicated.

17.4. October 7 was tentatively selected as the date for the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

17.5. There was a moment of silence in memory of staff member John C. Hennessee, N1KB, who died the previous week.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:26 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

David Sumner, K1ZZ
Secretary