



Digital Repeaters in the 2m Band

Eric Schmidt, KA5WMY

Several questions have been received via email in the past couple of months regarding digital repeaters. Not wanting to stall the growth of a technology, including emergency communications, the coordination committee recently worked together led by Paul Baumgardner, the Chairman of the Texas VHF-FM Society Coordination Committee, to come up with a temporary plan to accommodate P25 or D-star repeater experimentation in grid locked areas. As printed in the Spring 2007 newsletter, the Texas VHF-FM Society Board of Directors proposed and passed a motion to allow for an interim allocation for two years for a small portion of the currently allocated simplex band using the pairs of: TX/RX 146.450/147.450, 146.460/147.460, 146.470/147.470, 146.480/147.480, 146.490/147.490. This plan was arrived at for several key reasons including:

- The allocation is temporary for two years until a formal band plan can be proposed and passed by the Texas VHF-FM Society Membership.

- All of the Digital (P25 or D-Star) equipment is frequency agile (both repeaters and user radios), so changing frequencies to accommodate future band plans will not be an issue.

- It makes efficient use of available bandwidth by allowing for 10 KHz spacing vs. the current 20 KHz analog spacing.

- Current repeater trustees of analog pairs always have the option to change their operating mode from analog to digital as long as the bandwidth is compatible.

- Even if all of these pairs are allocated in a metro area, it still only uses a 30% of the available simplex bandwidth allocated from 146.400 MHz to 146.600 MHz.

- It allows for the propagation, testing, and development as well as application of digital technology.

So, the short story is that requests can be accommodated as long as it is understood that the coordination will be provisional and the trustee may need to change frequencies in the future once the band plan has been finalized and voted on by the Society membership. This is usually not an issue since the newer digital equipment is frequency agile. The provisional coordination will be bandwidth limited and could not be used for an analog repeater.

Digital Repeaters in the 70cm Band

The existing band plan for the Texas VHF-FM Society already contains a portion of the 70cm band for digital narrow band modes. The following frequency pairs are available for digital narrow band use in the 70 cm band. Currently it is also acceptable practice to convert an existing 70 cm analog pair over to a digital pair. Please work closely with your local zone coordinator with your digi-

In This Issue...

	Page
Digital Repeaters	1
From the President's Desk	2
Database Committee Update	3
Coordinators' Corner	3
Board Mtg. Minutes 9 Jun	5
General Mtg. Minutes 4 Aug	6
Board Mtg. Minutes 4 Aug	8
Board Mtg. Minutes 6 Oct	9
Tales from the Vice Squad	10
Portable Repeaters	11

(Continued on page 5)

**2007-2008
Texas VHF-FM Society
Board of Directors**

President:

W. E. "Rusty" Herman, KB5R
116 S. Ave. C
Humble, TX 77338
(281) 548-1500
president@txvhffm.com

Vice President:

Dave Davis, WB5WIA
4805 Spring Creek Dr.
Arlington, Texas 76017
(817) 272-3299
vicepresident@txvhffm.com

Secretary:

Jim Hester, K5HTK
104 Edwards Drive
Georgetown, TX 78628
(512) 868-1886
sec@txvhffm.com

Treasurer:

Mark Stennett, NA6M
418 Sunset Drive
Georgetown, TX 78628
(512) 569-3445
treas@txvhffm.com

NEWS Editor:

John Johnson, N5NH
6405 Widgeon Drive
Plano, Texas 75024
(972) 370-0765
newseditor@txvhffm.com

Directors at Large:

Hugh Davis, W5FM
P.O. Box 123
Huffman, TX 77336
(832) 971-3651
w5fm@txvhffm.com

Robert Lobaugh, W5JYJ
512 Market Street
Sinton, TX 78387
w5jyj@txvhffm.com

Louis Petit, WB5BMB
1213 15th Avenue N.
Texas City, Texas 77590
(409) 948-0349
wb5bmb@txvhffm.com

Gerald Richmond, N5ZXJ
3210 Glenwood Drive
Temple, TX 76502
(254) 913-7041
n5zxj@txvhffm.com

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Rusty Herman, KB5R

This is my first time writing to the Society as its president. I would like to thank all those members who voted for me and I hope that after my term is over, and based on my performance, you would be willing to vote for me again.

For all of you in east Texas, the next general membership meeting is coming your way. The Society's Winter Meeting will be held in conjunction with the Greater Houston Ham Fest. It will be held on March 1, 2008, at the Fort Bend County Fair Grounds in Richmond, Texas. The board meeting, which is open to the public, will be held at 11:00 am in the fair board's board room. The general meeting will start after the ARRL meeting in the main hall at approximately 1:00 pm. And, congratulations to Dr. Dave, K5HTK on his being re-elected to his post as ARRL's West Gulf Division's Vice Director.

Your board has several major projects underway at this time. Director Mark Stennett is drafting a modification to the by-laws to allow "off site" voting. The survey you completed last fall made it clear that this is a must do item. As we got deeper into the proposed activities necessary to make it work situations were uncovered that you need to be aware of. This is not a show stopper but now is the time for you to comment.

1. Anyone wishing to be a candidate for office will be required to announce early and provide a bio to the election committee.
2. Only those persons who have announced early will be on the "off site" ballot.
3. People who vote "off site" and come to the meeting will NOT get a second ballot.
4. Anyone nominated at the Summer Meeting from the floor will only have the meeting attendees, who have not previously voted, as potential supporters or voters.

Now is the time if you have any comments about the proposed system to make me or a director aware of your feelings. I would like to have the full proposal before the membership at the March 1st meeting.

Member's comments made us aware that you wanted the trustee of the Society's station, W5OGZ, to be in Texas. Recently the board took action to name Joe Makeever, W5HS, of Austin as the trustee for the station. Joe was already the registered agent for the Society so it seemed reasonable to combine these functions in one person.

The logo of the Texas VHF-FM Society to include the o-scope and sine wave is now the registered trademark of the Society. I would like to thank all those members who worked to make this long awaited action final.

The date base committee, led by Zone 2 Coordinator, Eric Schmidt, continues their task of writing code that will hopefully transport the Society's coordination functions into the 21st Century.

In a number of locations the issue of narrow band repeaters has been the source of significant discussion. I believe that the procedures put in place by Paul Baumgardner and his coordinators has placed Texas in such a position that D-Star and other narrow band systems can be placed in service without service problems to any member.

I have said before that your Society is not the repeater police. I mean that, but, in areas where repeater pairs are non-existent the Society needs your help. A committee led by

(Continued on page 3)

The Texas VHF-FM Society NEWS is published by and for the membership. Articles are encouraged and accepted that express views or information pertaining to the interest of Amateur Radio. The Texas VHF-FM Society NEWS reserves the right to edit material submitted with respect to suitability, style and format. Views and opinions expressed in the NEWS, unless specifically noted, do not necessarily represent those of the Directors of the Texas VHF-FM Society, Inc. Permission is hereby granted to reproduce any part or all of this publication provided that the Texas VHF-FM Society NEWS is acknowledged as the source. Copies of the By-Laws and Articles of Incorporation of the Texas VHF-FM Society are available from the Secretary upon request and may also be viewed online at www.txvhffm.org.

Director Hugh Davis is attempting to clean up the data base of unused pairs to be used for reassignment. It is not fair to the rest of the members for a trustee to sit, for years in some cases, on a pair that is tied to a repeater in his garage or store room. What is fair, you tell me, 6 months, a year, at some point the time becomes a travesty. The frequency belongs to all hams; a trustee is given the right to USE it. The Society web site has a form for members to identify "dead" repeaters. It is my belief that a member who knows of such a repeater has a DUTY to the ham community to identify it to Director Davis or me. There will be no midnight raid to take it back but an investigation will be started to determine if it is "dead" or is it expected to return to service. If it will be returned to service when is it expected, and there will be a follow up to ensure that it is within a reasonable time, returned to serve the ham community. The frequency belongs to ALL of us and it is our DUTY to protect it for all our benefit.

Finally, I would like to personally thank Director Mark Stennett for his term as Secretary of the Society. Mark has spent many hours of his time trying to sort out all the notes from our meetings and getting our paperwork straight. Thank you Mark, and greetings to our new Secretary, Director Jim Hester of Georgetown.

73's and Merry Christmas and a happy and safe New Year

Rusty Herman, KB5R
President
Texas VHF-FM Society

Database Committee Update

The database committee has made excellent progress towards an on-line database that will allow repeater trustees to renew their coordinations on-line as well as submit electronic updates for their contact information. The committee has successfully coded the distance algorithm to allow calculation into PHP (Hypertext Preprocessor) and the online database. The algorithm agrees 100% with what the FCC calculates for broadcast use and is within 99.5% of the current coordination software used by the zone coordinators. A feature will be hooks into Google maps and will show spacing circles on the map.

Since the code is written "in-house" it can be modified as necessary. Special thanks to Matthew Stennett K5RYN, Mark Stennett NA6M, and Steve Hicks N5AC for their contributions to the database committee.

Our goal is to have the system working and demonstrate it at the Winter Meeting.



This is that time of year... renewal time.

We ask all trustee's to complete the annual renewal process so that we can have accurate information to protect your channel pair from adjacent coordinations. We use the data that you provide us to populate our database so that we can search on location and frequencies so that in issuing a new coordination or allowing a move of an existing, that it doesn't impact your system.

The key to all of this is input from the trustee. The trustee needs to keep the Zone Coordinator current on all pertinent data related to a coordinated system. Tone access method, location--both address and coordinates, height above average terrain, pattern of antenna, any link channels that might be in use and the notes field for the ARRL Repeater Directory. There are many other fields, but these are important in helping us protect your system.

We get back around 70% of the renewals every year. That means we print and mail renewals and only 7 of 10 trustees send these back. Of our 1400 or so coordinated system that means that some 420 don't come back in the mail. That means we are only 70% accurate in what we present to the ARRL and our membership and in protecting your system.

Please help us help you by turning in your renewal. Please check the data and make any corrections and send it back to us. Soon, we will have some electronic methods of doing the renewals, but not yet. Please work with your Zone Coordinator to help us make the data more accurate.

We have five tremendous volunteers that are serving as Zone Coordinators. Paul Finch WB5IDM--Zone 1 UHF, Craig Green KV5E--Zone 1 Everything Else, Paul Gilbert KE5ZW--Zone 4 and 5, Eric Schmidt KA5WMY--Zone 2 and 3 and Johnny Stigler WA5ZRQ--Link Channels. We have a good workload between the four Zone coordinators and that helps us keep our practices more uniform. We would appreciate volunteers for Zone 3 and Zone 5, but we will be selective in who we let volunteer both from a participation and a uniformity to the Society practices perspective. We need some volunteers that would be willing to work with the Coordination Committee and learn the process that we follow. If you would like to volunteer, please contact me.

Another area of interest is the digital repeater experimentation. We are seeing digital repeater activity all over the bands. Both P25 and D-Star activity is showing up all over the state. We have found some areas in the band plan to accommodate that experimentation. We are interested in comments on how the digital usage and any other usages can co-exist. Please pass those on to the appropriate Zone Coordinator or me.

(Continued on page 4)

I appreciate the feedback that many of you have provided over the year about our processes. I appreciate the efforts of the Zone Coordinators over the year--we simply could not get the work done each year without them. And most important, I look forward to a successful 2008 for the Society. Thank you.

Paul Baumgardner W5PSB
Statewide Frequency Coordinator

Notes from Zone 2 & 3 – Fall 2007

Repeater Renewals

It's that time of year again when the weather starts turning colder, the leaves turn colors, and repeater renewals are mailed. The first mailing of 414 repeater renewals for Zones 2 & 3 was sent out via US mail on 8/27/07 with a due date of 9/25/07. A second mailing was sent out on 11/12/07 to all delinquent renewals. As of 11/25/07, 86% (356 out of 414) of the renewals in Zones 2 & 3 have been returned. If you have not returned your renewal, or have not received your renewal please contact me via email or phone as listed in the front of the newsletter. If you received your renewal and no longer operate this repeater, please help me clean up our records by checking the box adjacent to "I am relinquishing this coordination" and return the renewal. All renewals not received by 12/12/07 will be mailed a certified de-coordination letter to the address of record with the FCC.

Newly Coordinated Repeaters

We have had several new coordinations since the last issue of the NEWS. Please note that a repeater is not listed as coordinated until the on-air status form is signed and returned, so please return your on-air status notification if your repeater is on the air and you have an outstanding construction permit. In addition to these new coordinations, there are currently twenty seven active construction permit applications in Zone 2 & 3.

Zone 2 & 3 Newly Coordinated Repeaters between 5/6/07 and 11/25/07

Location	Output	Input	Call	Notes
Houston	441.875	446.875	KE5LGD	O141.3
Willis	224.240	222.640	WD5CFJ	O103.5
Snook	441.500	446.500	W5FFP	O103.5
George West	444.925	449.925	KC5LOS	OIE203.5
Devers	444.850	449.850	N6LXX	LCAE151.4
Houston	224.180	222.580	KR5K	O103.5
Angleton	147.180	147.780	N9QXT	OE141.3
Houston	146.470	147.470	W5HDR	D-star*
Houston	440.600	445.600	W5HDR	D-star
Houston	1293.000	1273.000	W5HDR	D-star
Bayside	147.200	147.800	AD5TD	O107.2
*Provisional coordination until band plan is approved by the Texas VHF-FM Society				

Waiting List

The following is the waiting list for Zone 2. The waiting list in Zone 2 is currently for 2m only, and there are pairs available on all other bands. There is currently no waiting list for Zone 3. A detailed explanation of the waiting list description and process appears on the Society website. A reminder that 145.250 is a shared, non-protected pair that can often be utilized until a protected pair becomes available. Repeaters on 145.250 are coordinated, but there are no specific spacing requirements. Access control is required on the input and output to minimize co-channel interference.

Zone 2 Coordination Waiting List

	Callsign	City	Band	Application Date
1	KK5XQ	Baytown	2m	1/28/2005
2	KW5O	Conroe	2m	3/29/2005
3	N5TRS	Houston	2m	7/14/2007

Waiting List

One of the most often received comments that I receive is "I've have not heard the 145.XYZ repeater on the air in several years, why don't you do something about it?". This is an area where everyone can help whether you are repeater trustee or system user. The Society has an "On-Air Re-

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 1)

tal narrow band coordination requests.

Output	Input
440.5250	445.52500
440.5375	445.53750
440.5500	445.55000
440.5625	445.56250
440.5750	445.57500
440.5875	445.58750
440.6000	445.60000
440.6125	445.61250
440.6250	445.62500
440.6375	445.63750
440.6500	445.65000
440.6625	445.66250
440.6750	445.67500
440.6875	445.68750
440.7000	445.70000
440.7125	445.71250
440.7250	445.72500

Minutes from Board of Directors Meeting June 9, 2007

Submitted by Mark Stennett, NA6M

General Meeting
9 June 2007 – Plano, TX

The meeting was called to order at 1310 by President Johnson.

Directors Present: Stennett, Petit, Johnson, Davis, Hester, Davis, Lobaugh

Directors Absent: Herman, Richmond

Directors Reports:

Director Stennett gave the Treasurer's report.

The Society received \$692 since the last meeting. PO Box renewed for \$106, the checking account balance is \$6131.12. Of that, \$599 from the ARRL is in the coordination fund leaving them a balance of about \$2400. The life member savings account has a balance of \$29,784.36. The liability insurance premium is due and will cost \$922. The board discussed the insurance bill and voted unanimously to pay it.

Director Petit reported that he is trying to work through his contacts to get more information on the Pave Paws issue regarding amateur UHF repeaters causing interference.

Director Davis discussed the upcoming newsletter and the election process.

Director Hester reported on the committee that was established to come up with uniform guidelines for the frequency coordinators to use concerning unused and inactive repeater frequencies. He reported that the committee has exchanged emails on the subject and working to come up with a charter statement.

Director Hugh Davis reported that he was participating in the committee with Director Hester.

Director Lobaugh reported that he has been involved in emergency management communications with the Department of Homeland Security and efforts to gain access to towers for amateur repeaters.

Director Stennett reported that the Trustee call sign change paperwork has been signed and will be submitted to the FCC by Joe Makeever.

President Johnson reported on the survey. He said that he had received his earlier in the week. Other directors reported receiving theirs as well.

President Johnson discussed the upcoming election coming up at Summerfest. He asked Director Hugh Davis to oversee the election committee. Director Stennett discussed the mechanics of the election for the previous year. President Johnson mentioned that the following directors are up for reelection:

WINTER MEETING

Our next General Meeting will be held in conjunction with the Houston Hamfest on Saturday, March 1, 2008. The hamfest is held by the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club at the Ft. Bend County Fairgrounds in Rosenberg, TX.

Meeting times will be posted closer to the hamfest date.

For more information please visit:

houstonhamfest.org

Directors Herman, Stennett, Petit, Lobough, Richmond

Discussion followed concerning the new location for the Austin Summerfest.

President Johnson discussed the Society's web site and said that the project was almost completed.

Director Dave Davis made a motion that the Society pass a resolution to acknowledge the previous web host, Ronnie Franklin for his great service over the past ten years. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Director Dave Davis made a motion that the Society encourage the membership to nominate Ronnie Franklin as an Honorary Life Member. The motion was seconded and it passed unanimously.

Zone 2 Frequency Coordinator Eric Schmidt reported on the Database Committee. He described how Steve Hicks, N5AC was continuing to work on designing the database for the project.

Director Stennett reported that the USPTO has sent the Society a letter concerning the trademark application. It asks some basic questions to clarify the application. Director Stennett suggested that Director Herman handle the response.

New Business:

Director Dave Davis mentioned that the experimental video recording of the general meeting in Midland was a success.

A motion was made to adjourn. It was seconded and passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 1351.

Minutes from General Meeting August 4, 2007

Submitted by Mark Stennett, NA6M

General Meeting
4 August 2007 – Austin, TX

The meeting was called to order at 1312 by President Johnson.

President Johnson started the meeting by describing the various member classes and their roles and privileges within the Society.

Director's Reports:

Vice President Herman reported that Society's logo has been successfully trademarked. Vice President Herman discussed the non disclosure agreement he was tasked with preparing. He said he has sent it out to the directors and is awaiting feedback.

Director Stennett reported that the Society has \$3,374.16 in the checking account and \$30,026.67 in the life membership sav-

ings account and it is earning about 80.10 interest per month. He has \$1,106 in funds yet to deposit from membership renewals at Summerfest.

Director Davis reported that electronic delivery of the newsletter has been going very well and allows him to make corrections and additions quickly. He invited the membership to submit articles and material for publication.

Director Petit reported that for the last term he has been working with the DOD concerning the impact some UHF amateur repeaters are having on the Pave Paws radar facilities. Director Petit recognized a couple of founding members of the Society in the room. He acknowledged Dick Fenner and George Munch. A loud round of applause followed.

Director Hugh Davis reported that he has been working on a committee to come up with a plan to better handle repeaters that are off the air and return the unused coordinations to the pool. He recognized that in our large metropolitan areas, there are no more frequency pairs available. He encouraged the membership to fill out the Repeater Status Form available on the Society's web site if they become aware of a system that is inactive.

Director Hester reported that he too has been participating in the committee referenced by Director Hugh Davis. He said the committee has been coming up with straightforward guidelines for coordinators to use uniformly. The guidelines are still being reviewed at this time.

Director Richmond reported that the Society's club call trustee has been updated to reflect Joe Makeever.

Director Lobaugh echoed the importance of accurate reporting where inactive repeaters are. He encouraged the membership to participate in the process, use the Repeater Status Form and send it to their zone coordinator. He also reported that there is a lot of digital activity in South Texas.

A member asked how current the repeater directory is. President Johnson responded that the data is submitted annually in December to the ARRL. The Society last published a Texas directory in 2006 and said there is a lot of work involved.

Frequency Coordinator's Report:

SFC Paul Baumgardner reported that as of the January 2007 ARRL submission, Texas has 1494 coordinated systems which includes a couple on 10 meters, 727 on UHF and 12 ATV systems across the state. Metropolitan areas include Dallas/Fort Worth at over 200 coordinations, Houston with 185 and Austin/San Antonio with 135. He said there were 1680 Coordinated systems in 2006 and the difference is due mostly due to unused channels being reclaimed. The effort is ongoing and is not a one time event.

SFC Paul also reported over the course of the last 18 months, the coordinators handled 86 requests for new systems and 4 complaints, mostly related to timely responses from the coordinators. He reminded those present that this is a volunteer effort

and to please be patient. He welcomed anyone who felt they were being ignored to contact him and he would get it resolved.

SFC Paul discussed digital and DStar. He said there is a lot of email crossing his inbox lately. He said that Texas has been proactive and has been sticking to their plan. He reminded members that if you currently have an analog coordination and want to set up DStar, go right ahead and convert your coordinated channel. For those who are trying to establish a new DStar system, there is adequate spectrum available in all areas of Texas on UHF between 440.525 MHz and 440.725 MHz. On VHF, a temporary solution available in areas that are already congested. There are 5 channels, 146.450, 146.460, 146.470, 146.480 and 146.490 MHz. They are paired with their 147 MHz counterparts 1 MHz above and will be coordinated on an interim basis for digital only. The interim period will expire in October 2008. Paul invited feedback from all trustees and users concerning these DStar systems and their impact on analog or simplex users.

Old Business:

Logo Trademark:

President Johnson reported that there was a motion made at the 2006 winter meeting to trademark the Society's logo. That motion was withdrawn. Johnson pointed out that the Society's logo is being used inappropriately on the internet so the board decided to take action at the Midland board meeting. The cost to trademark the logo is \$700 and it is expected to be completed by October.

A member asked what the Bylaws say concerning the spending of Society funds. Secretary Stennett responded that the Bylaws currently say that the board needs to seek membership approval for any expenditure in excess of \$100. The member asked if the board received permission. President Johnson said that the board had not. Bernie Davies, KC5LGS made a motion to approve the board's decision to spend \$700 on the logo copyright. Seconded by Paul Gilbert, KE5ZW. Discussion followed. The motion was passed.

Member Dennis Riise, K5AVT made a motion to authorize the board to spend up to \$1000 to defend the Society's logo. Seconded by member Allen Ramsey, WB5ALR. Motion passed.

Member Dallas Mellichamp, KD4HNX made a motion to raise the minimum amount the board is allowed to spend. President Johnson said that it is a Bylaws change and would require advance notice to the membership before being presented. The board agreed to take an action item to draft up appropriate changes for presentation at the next business meeting.

Society Web site:

President Johnson gave an overview on the new web site. Director Stennett was acknowledged for his work on the new site. Director Stennett acknowledged Matthew Stennett, K5RYN for his efforts in making the PHP code tie the database search to the web site.

2007 Survey:

President Johnson reviewed the survey results with the members. He said he had received a few complaints from members about the background information. He explained that the intent was to be as unbiased as possible while trying to deliver an overview of the history of the topic.

Secretary's note: For full details on the survey results, please see the Society's web site.

President Johnson reported that Director Stennett was working on language changes for the Bylaws in order to accommodate off site voting.

A member asked what the return percentage was on the survey. President Johnson replied that the Society sent out 1247 surveys and received 235 or 19% in return.

Member Jay Hoffman, KA5OST pointed out that with a 19% return, mailing out ballots may not be the most effective way to handle this.

Dick Fenner, W5AVI said that he thought 10 to 12 percent return would be typical.

Member Allen Ramsey, WB5ALR said that in most national elections there is typically a 3 to 5 percent return.

A member said he thought the Society was doing the right thing by trying to keep the costs down and that if one member who would otherwise be frustrated with the process was able to vote and happy with the process, it is worth it.

Member Charlie Kosman, WB2NQV said he felt that allowing more members to vote would end up increasing member participation at meetings.

Member Jeff Cofsky, W5JSC asked how many members have signed up on the new web site. Director Stennett reported that there are presently 102 registered members on the site. A member asked if you were registered on the old site, would you be on the new site. Director Stennett said that aside from the newsletter email list no other login information from the old site was carried over. Members were invited to create a user account on the new web site and to look for a confirmation email from the system. If you were on the old newsletter list, you were added to the new one.

Member Royce Taylor, KA5OHJ asked what the returned survey distribution was by zip code. Director Stennett said he did not track that information but that the returns were from all over the state.

New Business:

President Johnson discussed the location for the winter meeting and said that San Antonio has again extended an invitation to the Society. A member suggested having the winter meeting in Houston in March. President Johnson commented that the Society has not been to Houston in some time and thanked the member for the suggestion.

Founding Member Dick Fenner, W5AVI addressed the members and commented that while he has been following the online discussions regarding Society business and was sorry that he has not been able to participate in recent meetings as much as he would like to. He stated that amateur radio was supposed to be fun and recalled that while he was Chairman, the last time they tried to rewrite the Bylaws. It turned out to be quite a job. He suggested that the Society revisit the Standards For Coordination concerning frequency tolerance. He agreed that the Frequency Coordinator has a busy job as does the board of directors. He recommended that the roles be maintained separately. He commented that during his tenure the board back then also felt that mail out ballots were too costly. He recalled a time when the Society held business meetings in the winter and technical meetings in the summer. Dick thanked the members for listening and received a loud round of applause.

President Johnson said that at the 2006 summer meeting, a motion to not allow the meetings to be recorded was passed. He said that at the following board meeting, the board was almost unanimous in their decision to allow the meetings to be recorded. The Society will publish an official video on the web site.

Member Gerry Dalton, W5MAY made a motion that the Society should be directed to only make TXVHFFM domain email address available to the board and coordinators for official business only and that when that individual is no longer serving in an official capacity for the Society, that they relinquish the email address. Second by member Glen Collier, K5GFC. Discussion followed. Director Dave Davis asked Gerry to modify his motion to include committee chairs. Gerry agreed and noted that his intent is to limit use to official Society business.

A member made a motion to table Gerry's motion. It was seconded and after discussion was passed.

Member Alan Isaachsen, KB2WF discussed having the Society develop a strategy to reduce the channel spacing to better accommodate digital systems. Zone 4 Coordinator Paul Gilbert, KE5ZW responded that there are already 10 kHz channel spacing provisions in the current band plan to accommodate. He explained that the current user base radios do not work well with 10 kHz in all scenarios so there are some spacing rules that need to be followed. Paul suggested that instead of coordinating by mileage spacing, the Society should start coordinating based on actual coverage contours. He noted that there are a number of software programs available now that make this possible, including RadioMobile, ComStudy, EDX Signal and a Linux program called Splat! He said the challenge will be getting trustees to keep their information up to date. Alan asked if we still want the same channel spacing scheme in 10 years. Paul Gilbert responded that we should adjust the spacing tables to keep up with technology as needed but there is no way to plan today what you will be dealing with in 10 years. He emphasized that amateur radio equipment today by and large, is based on 25 kHz bandwidth. We need to let the subscriber base, the user radios to catch up before we tighten the channel spacing any further.

Election:

President Johnson reminded the members that in order to vote they will need a 2007 voting member card. They need to present the card to receive a ballot. The meeting was paused to allow the members to get their voting cards if needed.

Director Hugh Davis took the floor and described the election process. He introduced the candidates one by one. And entertained any nominations from the floor. None were offered. Tom Blackwell, N5GAR made a motion to cease taking nominations from the floor. It was seconded by Allen Ramsey, WB5ALR. The motion carried, none were opposed.

The list of candidates are:

Rusty Herman, Charlie Kozman, Bob Lobough, Louis Petit, Gerald Richmond, Mark Stennett

Ballots were cast and the Election Committee collected them. The Election Committee retired to tally the vote. During the count,

President John Johnson delivered the Database Committee Report for Steve Hicks, N5AC. Highlights included tying the coordination database to the membership database and allowing trustees to modify their data via the web site to a certain extent while keeping a running history of previous information in the database.

Director Hugh Davis announced the winners according to the Teller's report. The winning candidates are:

Rusty Herman, Bob Lobaugh, Louis Petit, Gerald Richmond, Mark Stennett

President Johnson asked for any other new business. A motion was made to adjourn with numerous seconds. Motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 1603.

Minutes from Board of Directors Meeting August 4, 2007

Submitted by Mark Stennett, NA6M

Board of Directors Meeting
4 August 2007 – Austin, TX

The meeting was called to order at 1625 by President Johnson.

All directors were present except Director Hester.

Officer Election:

Director Dave Davis nominated Director Herman for President. Director Herman accepted. With no other nominations on the floor nominations were closed and the Directors voted to have Director Herman as President.

President Herman took over the meeting.

Director Davis nominated Director Hugh Davis for Vice Presi-

dent. Director Hugh Davis declined. Director Dave Davis withdrew his nomination. Director Johnson nominated Director Dave Davis for Vice President. Director Dave Davis accepted. With no other nominations on the floor nominations were closed and the Directors voted to have Director Dave Davis as Vice President.

Director Hugh Davis nominated Director Stennett for acting Secretary and official Treasurer. Director Stennett indicated he was interested in having someone else take over as Secretary and agreed to accept the nomination until the next board meeting. With no other nominations on the floor nominations were closed and the Directors voted to have Director Stennett as Treasurer and acting Secretary.

Director Stennett nominated Director Johnson for Newsletter Editor. Director Johnson accepted. With no other nominations on the floor nominations were closed and the Directors voted to have Director Johnson as Newsletter Editor.

The directors discussed the continued appointment of State Frequency Coordinator Chair. Paul Baumgardner was affirmed and will continue in that role.

Next Board of Directors Meeting:

The Directors discussed having the next board meeting at the fall ham swap in Belton. Director Richmond agreed to make the arrangements.

A motion was made to adjourn. It was seconded and passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 1642.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Fort Worth Hamfest	Jan 11-12
San Antonio Amateur Radio Fiesta	Jan 12
Greater Houston Hamfest	Mar 1
Midland St. Patricks Day Hamfest	Mar 7
Belton HamEXPO	Apr 19

Minutes from Board of Directors Meeting October 6, 2007

Submitted by Mark Stennett, NA6M

Board of Directors Meeting
6 October 2007 – Belton, TX

The meeting was called to order by President Herman at 1305.

Directors Present: Dave Davis, Herman, Hester, Johnson, Petit, Richmond, Stennett

Directors Absent: Hugh Davis, Lobaugh

Director's Reports:

Director Dave Davis said that he has some things to discuss in executive session.

Director Johnson said that it is time to publish another newsletter. The board agreed that the next newsletter should come out by the end of October.

Director Stennett reported that the Society has \$30,661.30 in the life member savings account which is earning 3.3 percent annually. The Society has \$4,404.41 in the checking account.

Director Stennett reported that he continues to receive positive feedback about the Society's web site.

Director Petit reported that the Pave Paws interference issue is slowly being resolved.

Director Hester had nothing to report.

Director Richmond had nothing to report.

Director Johnson gave the Coordinator's report for SFC Paul Baumgardner. Renewals have gone out from the 4 coordinators. Response is somewhat typical and second letters have gone out. Some channels are being returned to the pool.

Narrowband Planning:

SFC Paul Baumgardner was unable to make the meeting so no action was possible on this item.

President Herman discussed some activity going on within the NFCC. He said the NFCC has sent a letter to the FCC, lending support and clarification to the definition of a repeater as relates to Dstar. He said that Texas voted to support the sending of the letter.

Standardizing Forms Among Coordinators:

President Herman said that Director Hugh Davis was working on this. Hugh was unable to attend the meeting so his report was unavailable. Discussion followed concerning the forms that are available on the web site. Director Dave Davis discussed the need to migrate toward electronic renewals. Currently the Standards require a signed form.

Cleaning Up The Database:

Director Hester reported that the committee had been discussing ways to verify that repeaters are actually on the air. The committee concluded that congested areas should be audited in order to make unused channels available for waiting trustees. One method suggested would be to require witness signatures on the renewal form.

Director Davis discussed various scenarios whereby repeater operation verification may prove to be futile and or time consuming, given that there are no rules in the Standards that re-

quire a repeater to be operational 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Director Hester clarified that the intent of the study was to identify unused pairs.

Director Johnson reminded the board that there is a status form on the web site that people can use to report any system that is off the air to the Frequency Coordinators. He said that the form is seldom used.

Director Hester said that when the committee was formed, someone felt that the topic of unused repeater coordinations were important.

Director Dave Davis suggested that this new witness system be used if a Repeater Status Form is received.

President Herman asked that this item be tabled until he can write about it in the newsletter.

Off Site Voting:

Director Stennett reported that the according to the recent survey, the respondents want to have it available and that we need to implement it in some form. Stennett said he has begun drafting some language that addresses this need and suggested that the Society move the membership database to the web site in order to streamline the process. The board discussed various methods and concluded that we should still allow on site voting and allow nominations from the floor at the summer meetings. The ballot made available to those who want to absentee vote would be the same one used at the summer meeting and any write in candidates would not have the benefit from the mail in vote.

Director Davis recommended that the Election Committee be charged with assembling Friday night before the Summer Meeting and count the mailed in ballots and hold the tally in secrecy until the on site ballots are counted the following day. Director Stennett said that the person tending the mail box is not typically on the Election Committee and would have no right to see those ballots. The control code written on the envelope would be checked off the list of authorized mail in ballots.

A member suggested that the Society look into using bar codes on the ballots to speed up the check in process.

A motion was made to have Director Stennett draft a Bylaws change to accommodate off site voting to be presented to the board for ratification. The motion was seconded and passed.

New Secretary:

President Herman announced that Director Hester has agreed to take on the Secretary duties and acknowledged Director Stennett for his efforts as Secretary for the past 2 years.

Director Dave Davis nominated Director Hester as Secretary. Director Hester accepted. The vote was unanimous.

Messages From Members Relating To Past Events:
Procedure For Members to Volunteer as Coordinators:

Director Davis made a motion to move items 11 and 12 to executive session. The motion was seconded and passed.

Winter Meeting Location:

President Herman asked if anyone has received invitations to attend their functions.

Director Stennett reminded the board that the Winter Meeting has recently been held in Arlington, San Antonio and Midland. He suggested the board consider going east for the upcoming Winter Meeting.

Member Mike Hardwick, N5BCX was in attendance and extended an invitation to the Society to attend the Greater Houston Hamfest on March 1st at the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds in Rosenberg. See <http://www.houstonhamfest.org> for more information. The board agreed to look into holding the Winter Meeting at this event and thanked Mike for his offer.

New Business:

Director Petit said that he would be contacting David Woolweaver about the bill that died recently concerning the ban on using wireless devices while driving. He said there have been two incidents recently in Texas where distracted drivers were involved in accidents that resulted in one death and one serious injury. He expected that the bill would come back in some form as a result.

A motion was made to go into executive session. It was seconded and passed.

The board went into executive session at 1432.

The board returned from executive session at 1504.

A motion was made to adjourn. It was seconded and passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 1505.

Tales from the Vice Squad

Howdy! Dave Davis here, WB5WIA. I've graduated from the Society's newsletter to serving as your Vice President this year.

During the late spring and early summer the membership was polled on several matters concerning the day to day operation of the Society, and I wish to discuss one of these topics here, namely the idea of having some board positions linked to geographical areas of the state rather than all positions being elected at large as is now the case.

At the fall board meeting, past president John Johnson, board member Hugh Davis, and I were assigned to a committee to study this issue and present a plan of action back to the board and eventually the membership. Please note that any changes to the board will require a by-laws revision, and by design that is a slow process, so please don't expect us to rush through this in

a short time.

Let me set the scenario. For Frequency Coordination purposes, the state is divided into 5 zones that are administered by (generally) an individual coordinator. (Note: at this time, Zone 1 has two coordinators, one for 440 and one for the rest, Zones 2 and 3 are coordinated by Eric Schmidt, and Paul Gilbert is riding herd on both Zones 4 and 5, but you get the general idea.)

The idea of having a board member from each zone would insure that every area in the state had a voice on the board, much as our house of representatives have members from districts across the nation. One proposed method for this would be that the odd year elections (where we have 5 director seats up for election) would have the geographical seats, and the even numbered elections would have the remaining 4 seats elected at large. Other discussion points have suggested that we increase by one the directors, and have 2 members from each zone, with staggered terms. The possibilities are almost unlimited.

That is the upside of the program, here is one downside. Under the current election rules, candidates self nominate for the board, so there are no restrictions on where the board members reside. In the past several election cycles, there have not been a large number of people from the extremities of the state running for office. If we go to designated seats, and we don't get any applicants for those seats, the system will be stressed.

The second difficulty is deciding, if we implement designates seats, who gets to vote for these seats. Does the entire membership vote for every candidate, or do we only accept votes from Zone 2 for the Zone 2 rep?

We have a lot of things to think about as we examine this proposed change to the operation of the Society.

What do you think? Please let Hugh, John, or me know what you think. Email works best, mine is wb5wia@arrl.net.

Thanks
Dave
WB5WIA
Vice President, Texas VHF-FM Society

(Continued from page 4)

peater Status" form available on the website for you to report repeaters that are not on the air. If you know of a repeater that is not on the air, please go to our website, complete the form, and send it to your appropriate Zone Coordinator. This will significantly help us to redeploy frequencies that have been vacated but not reported. Help us manage this natural resource.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any question or are interested in constructing a repeater in Zone 2 or 3. Phone calls and email are always welcome as well.

73,

Eric Schmidt
KA5WMY
Zone 2 & 3 Frequency Coordinator

Portable Repeaters

The zone coordinators have had several requests over the past few months for portable repeaters. The committee has agreed upon the following policy for requests for portable "emergency" repeaters:

1. The trustees should utilize UHF pairs of TX/RX 441.300/446.300, 441.325/446.325, 441.350/446.350, 441.375/446.375. These backyard pairs are available on a "first come, first serve basis" and will not be published in the repeater directory.
2. 12.5 kHz and 10 kHz spacing is also allowed for portable repeaters from 441.300 to 441.375 but must be coordinated in cooperation with the local zone coordinator.
3. There is no geographical spacing requirement for co-channel systems
4. The users must accept co-channel interference
5. The repeater must have PL on the input and output
6. The antenna height must be 100 ft AGL or less and output no greater than 100W ERP