

NOTES FROM 2022-Q1 NEW ENGLAND DIVISION CABINET MEETING  
JANUARY 8, 2022

(Thanks to N1EP)

AB1OC welcomed everyone. He discussed the agenda for the meeting and the meeting format.

AB1OC announced two new Assistant Directors: KU1U, AD for Emergency Communications & Public Service; and Rob Leiden, K1UI, AD for Spectrum Protection & Use.

AB1OC is seeking interested, qualified individuals to serve in an Assistant Director role for Mentoring & Ham Development and STEM and Youth Outreach.

AB1OC invited individuals with issues they feel are important to form “Special Interest Groups,” create groups.io lists and hold Zoom meetings.

AB1OC and K9HI will hold the division’s first Town Hall for all ARRL New England Division members on February 16, 2022.

K9HI gave a recap of the ARRL Board meeting from July, 2021. The ARRL passed a motion to reimburse the FCC \$35 application fee (once it is implemented) to youths who take and pass the amateur radio exam. At the same time, the ARRL VE fee will be lowered to \$5 for youths. More details to follow.

AB1OC offered a look ahead at issues the ARRL might deal with at the upcoming Board meeting.

Several attendees indicated that their clubs offered a free year membership to candidates who successfully pass their exam and earn their first license.

K1TW suggested that radio clubs can increase membership by sending out postcards that look like QSLs introducing new hams in their club’s area and invite them to join. Monthly “New Amateur Reports” may be found at <<http://www.arrl.org/new-amateur-reports>>.

K1BG recommended that VE teams collect voluntary contact email, phone contact info on a SEPARATE signup sheet from the Form 605 to aid in soliciting and mentoring new and potential members.

A suggestion was made that clubs give a free radio to kids who earn their ham radio license. N1EP recommended that clubs in remote regions like Maine give the kids external antennas or help them construct antennas for their free HT or mobile rig in order to access repeaters.

AB1OC and Mike Walters, W8ZY, ARRL Field Services Manager both emphasized that “ham radio clubs are the backbone and the heart and soul of amateur radio, and that is where our focus should be.”

KC1NEK mentioned the Newport County RC’s ARTEN (Amateur Radio Training Experiment Network), a microwave experimenters group run by Paul, K1YBE. AD K1UI to follow up.

ARRL has filed a response to the Forest Service Administration’s proposal to charge fees for amateur radio repeaters. The ARRL is also worried that fees could eventually be widened to hams operating radios on public lands (e.g., POTA, SOTA).

W1WRA brought up discussion about the importance of reaching new audiences who rely on YouTube videos for education and mentoring. “Why should I join a club or join the ARRL? This is a question that has been present on social media and Youtube.” We need to answer that question and why it is important to support clubs and be involved face-to-face instead of just virtually. K5ATA said that this type of learning and outreach was a high priority for ARRL Education & Learning Department.

AB1OC noted that the ARRL was working on a Clean Signal Initiative to work with manufacturers and hams to make sure we have clean transmissions.

K5ATA and others spoke about youth outreach & STEM, and how to work with schools and teachers, and have proper lesson plans, etc.

AA1SE noted that Ross Hochstrasser, W1EKG, has a great plan for teaching Technician classes that anyone can use to increase the number of licensed amateurs. Ross’ email is bavarianradio@comcast.net .

N1EP discussed the idea of a team to help clubs and hams make successful space communications contacts, such as satellites and ISS, using modest ham radio gear. Many hams and clubs cannot afford expensive radios and antennas.

N1EP discussed his new appointments in Maine, including a “YL Champion.”

AF1R asked if Headquarters might create better promotional material to distribute to the general public at outdoor events.

AF1R suggested a new digital initiative, introducing people to keyboard-to-keyboard digital conversational modes and; exposing them to more than FT8; and that we start periodic section nets on RTTY, PSK. She discussed VARA Chat (which requires a \$70 software license for VARA HF for full use of the software) and JS8Call. AF1R will set up a team to pursue ideas.

Steve Goodgame, K5ATA, presented on the ARRL Education & Learning Department. He discussed the various courses and tools available through learn.arrl.org. Steve talked about getting students and teachers educated about amateur radio, but emphasized that, “An unengaged new ham is just a ham who will let their ticket expire.” And the same goes for teachers. If hams, clubs, and mentors do not keep the kids and teachers engaged in amateur radio, they will lose interest. Stephen also noted there is a long list of ARRL scholarships that are available and that teachers want to know about scholarships. K5ATA also talked about the ARRL Teacher Institute Levels 1 and 2 and that more teachers should enroll. There are grants available for free ham radios, etc.

Brad Brown Jr, KC1JMH, Maine’s SYC, noted that many schools are also Red Cross Shelters, and that would be a great excuse for getting ham radio stations into the schools.

K5ATA was asked if ARRL renewal forms could be modified so that additional funds could be donated to specific programs like the Teacher’s Institute.

KC1NEK spoke about a program sponsored by cyber.org that empowers educators to teach about cybersecurity to K-12. It might be a good model for ARRL to emulate.

Larry Krainson W1AST, indicated that ham radio clubs and volunteers are needed to help with The Big E exhibition in W. Springfield, MA from September 16 to Oct 2. The ham radio booth needs to be staffed all 17 days. Hams can answer the public’s questions, operate the special event station, etc. Listserv at: <<https://groups.io/g/ProjectBigE>>.

W1SJ reminded everyone about the Vermont State Convention, Feb. 26, 2022

Tess, K1DT, spoke about the importance of recruiting members in the 40s, 50s, and 60s age group.

K9HI announced the next NEACC (New England ACC) meeting will be held via Zoom on January 29. ACCs, SMs, and club presidents are welcome to attend. Individuals can join the NEACC groups.io list at: <<https://groups.io/g/neacc>>.

A suggestion to create a New England Division Slack channel for all ARRL members was made. AB1OC and K9HI will discuss this.

The next division cabinet meeting will be scheduled in approximately three months. Fred, AB1OC, indicated he plans to hold four meetings per year.