

Minutes of the Butte Radio Club Monthly Meeting

Date: January 3, 2026

Location: Butte Library

Time: 10:30 AM

In Attendance:

Gene Bodenberger (N7ARO), Rob Sisson (KE7IYU), Verne Brown (KK6DIO), guest Zak Law (KJ7ZTE), Rodney Pewitt (N7TRG), Rick DuPrey (KD0TSC), Jack Hook (KK7IZN), Jerry McDonald (W7FVB), Erik Bodenberger (KA7JMH), James Burk (KG7OMB), Tom Hoffman (KZ7T), Steve Shannon (AI7KS).

Treasurer's Annual Report:

BEGINNING BALANCE – The balance at the beginning of January 2025 was \$666.04.

REVENUE – We received \$450.00 in dues and \$5239.08 in donations for a total of \$5689.48 in revenue.

EXPENSES – Our expenses for the year totaled \$3289.30.

YEAR END BALANCE – \$3066.22

Motion to Approve Treasurer's Report:

Motion Made: Rob Sisson

Seconded: Erik Bodenberger

Vote

Aye: Unanimous

Nay:

Abstain:

Minutes of the Last Meeting:

Any Corrections? None

Motion to Approve the Minutes of the Last Meeting with noted corrections

Motion Made: Rodney Pewitt

Seconded: Tom Hoffman

Vote

Aye: Unanimous

Nay:

Abstain:

Old Business

Registered Agent

Steve paid Montana LLC Services and gave the invoice and receipt to Jack. Steve will fill out the contract, scan it and send it to John Stoppler.

Repeater Site Improvements

No RigRunner has been received yet, nor has an email saying it was shipped.

New Business

Power Outage at Red Mountain – Steve explained that in the wind storm on Wednesday, December 17 Red Mountain lost power. Our batteries lasted almost four days then our repeater died late Saturday or early Sunday. On Sunday we notified Rob Morris with the Forest Service and he called NorthWestern Energy. The power was restored on Tuesday. We lost our repeater for three of those days, Sunday, Monday, and part of Tuesday.

We currently have about 200 Ah; James added about 70 Ah in the fall. We discussed adding more batteries. Also, it would be nice to have reporting so when power is lost we can notify the Forest Service sooner. The RIGrunner we have on backorder and our microwave/WiFi link might facilitate that, but we might need to widen the bandwidth of the wifi link.

We also discussed adding solar panels. The Forest Service demolished the battery room we used to have. We might be able to get permission to place 300 or 400 hundred watts of solar panels there. They would have to be sturdy: multiple panels on uni-strut channels anchored against the wind.

Old Repeater Disposition – The Yaesu DR-1X repeater we will remove from Red Mountain in the spring or summer will be surplus to us. What should we do with it? Some ideas include selling it to Anaconda. Gene thought we paid \$500. We have seen some lockup issues, but we suspect those are because of the interface to the ARCOM RC210 controller. Such lockups are noted on the ARCOM website.

We also discussed extending our area by linking our repeater to the Anaconda repeater via a 70 cm RF link.

James, Jack, and Steve will contact Jerry at the Anaconda club to see where that leads, if they might have any interest in our old Yaesu repeater (which is significantly newer than their old GE repeaters.)

Any other business for the good of the order:

EMCOMMS

Because of the recent wind storm, Verne Brown asked about emergency procedures, such as scheduling volunteers to monitor the repeater and respond to any calls. Rob Sisson has procedures for ARES, RACES, and AREDN. We can look into their best practices, message handling, and nets. Also discussed, hospital em-comms. See Jen Phillips at the DES meetings.

Related to the EMCOMM subject, members were interested in the possibility of assembling some go-boxes for 2 meters and HF and some kind of plan to go with them. This might be a topic for future grant applications.

Rob Sisson will dig up his old EMCOMMS materials for us to review.

MINUTES – READ DURING MEETING OR EMAIL PRIOR TO THE MEETING?

Rick DuPrey asked about the possibility of emailing the minutes out, rather than reading them at every meeting in the interest of shortening the meeting. Jack said he wouldn't read them if they were in his email. Steve mentioned that in similar situations he has emailed the minutes and that often times it was clear that some people hadn't read them. He is willing to email the minutes if that's the consensus.

REPEATER IMPROVEMENTS

Summer upgrade suggestion: add 300 watts Solar, 400-800 Ah of batteries and a pan-tilt-zoom remote controlled (PTZ) camera to the site. Enhance the reliability of the microwave link to town; the link to James' place isn't reliable enough and a higher resolution camera and remote control might require greater bandwidth.

CLUB ASSETS AT CLIFF'S HOUSE

After efforts to contact Cliff went unanswered, Jack raised the issue of the previous club assets that are currently at Cliff's house. Also, Cliff is the listed party on the W7FO.org domain. James is unable to update the Google Server and forward it to the ButteRadioClub.org domain without gaining control of the domain and cannot cancel the Google Server until this is resolved. It appears that the domain appears to auto-renew in someone's credit card. Also, there's a President's Book and two old repeaters that might be at Cliff's house. **Gene will contact Cliff.**

Motion to Adjourn:

Motion Made: Steve Shannon

Seconded: Erik Bodenberger

Vote

Aye: Unanimous