

# SJCARS

San Juan County Amateur Radio Society

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## Minutes of Meeting: 2020.01.10

Respectfully submitted by Elizabeth Menozzi (KE7KDR), SJCARS Secretary

## Call to Order

The SJCARS club meeting was called to order at 11:33 PM by Scott (W7SLM) in the training room at Mullis Fire Station, Friday Harbor, San Juan Island.

## Attendees

Wayne (WA6MPG)	Ed (KD7TUN)	Clare (KE7WQY)	Clarke (KE7LRK)
Brenda (KJ7BUV)	Greg (AE7EL)	Bill (KF7KND)	Kent (KF7VDD)
Dan (N6AU)	Carol (N7LHY)	Peter (WA7FUS)	Basil (N7NIX)
Brian (K7BLS)	Al Bush (?)	Larry (NM7A)	Jim (KJ7BJT)
Elizabeth (KE7KDR)	Hoop (K9QJS)	Scott (W7SLM)	Patti (KJ7PRW)
Karl Kuetzing	Chief Collins	Sheriff Krebs	Rick Fraiser
Chief Williams	Caleb		

**Note:** We forgot to pass around a sign-in sheet. So, if I got anyone's name or call sign wrong, or if I missed someone, please let me know so that I can correct the list.

# Summary of Motions and Votes

## Previous Meeting's Minutes

The minutes of the December meeting were approved as posted on the web site.

## Topics Discussed

- Presentation of certificates to club officers
  - New Secretary (Elizabeth Menozzi, KE7KDR), "passing of the pen" from Peter.
  - Thanks to Peter for his excellent minutes during his tenure as secretary
- Introductions
- Presentation by Chief Williams ([detailed notes below](#))
- Club business
  - Approval of minutes
  - Officer reports
    - President -- repeating fast radio burst reported from nearby galaxy
    - No other officer reports
  - Committee reports
    - EcoLink update: getting close to pulling fiber to Ed's garage
    - Cady repeater is on battery as of this morning
    - No other reports
  - [Calendar](#)
    - Will be posted on the website
    - Next meeting is 2/14
    - Lopez picnic currently scheduled on the same weekend as other activities. Need to discuss possibly rescheduling at next meeting.
  - No old business
  - New business (organizing meeting dates) tabled to next meeting
  - Stories from your shack provided by x, y, and z ([see below for more](#))

# Presentation

## San Juan County Radio System Upgrade

presented by Chief (Scott) Williams

### Key points:

- Chief (Scott) Williams appreciates the invite and welcomes folks to stop by the Orcas firehouse to say hi and talk.
- Current system situation and challenges
  - Transmission sites for San Juan County Emergency Services
    - Mt. Constitution
      - One site for San Juan County law enforcement
      - One site for Orcas Island Fire & Rescue
    - Town of Friday Harbor and Roche Harbor
      - Antennas located in FH which service SJ EMS, SJ FD, Shaw, and Lopez
    - Different frequencies
    - Law enforcement is UHF, Fire is VHF
    - All sites require visual inspection to identify antenna issues, maintenance, and need for repair.
    - No interoperability -- no direct system communications with sheriff, fire, EMS, or public works county-wide
    - No redundancy
    - No 24/7 monitoring -- failures identified by reduced radio communications
    - Increasing difficulty to support current technology -- failures increasing as equipment gets older
  - Map of coverage shows pockets where there is no/low coverage
  - Challenges and obstacles to current transmission signals:
    - Line of sight communications
    - Unable to transmit through rock, minerals, etc.
  - Orcas comms: lightning strike example where units are trying to coordinate on fire caused by the lightning strike
    - Played recordings of transmission to different areas
    - Dispatch barely able to decipher transmission from bad reception area
    - Dispatchers become very good at "speaking static"
  - In order to make improvements to current communications more antenna sites are needed

- Need land / site construction
    - Permitting
    - Same process currently used to identify maintenance and repairs
  - This has been discussed for several years with no resolution.
  - If nothing is done continue with poor coverage and no interoperability. Impacts safety of responders, residents, and visitors
  - If something is done substantial scalable coverage can be established with communications between agencies, improved communications for 911 and between responder and dispatch.
  - Technology requirements
    - Analog IP voted simulcast solution:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kr7SY7mUNIs>
    - Support current analog technologies, use existing radios
    - Allow all agencies to talk county-wide and add inter-agency communications
    - No more switching channels
    - Improves coverage
    - No new construction permits, etc.
    - Scalable - no licensing fees for adding new sites, just equipment costs
    - Capable interoperability with federal and state agencies
    - Redundant system controllers can be placed in different physical locations
- Proposed new system
  - Map showing improved coverage with proposed solution.
  - Financial comparisons with other areas of the country based on square miles provided.
  - Initial capital cost proposed is \$2.88M, annual maintenance estimated at approximately \$120k
  - Resolution on the ballot set by county council asks for \$5M and maintenance is closer to \$250k to cover potential future unknowns.
  - This is the max they can collect, but they would stop collecting once this is funded because they can't use this money for anything besides 911 / emergency communications (RCW 82.14.420).
- What can be done by community who support this to help:
  - Send letters to the editor (local papers).

- Respond to posts on social media to help educate folks.
- Please send feedback on presentation and any technical questions to Chief Williams (swilliams@orcasfire.org)

## Calendar of Upcoming Events

**January 10** General Meeting - Mullis

**February 14** General Meeting - TBD

**March 13** General Meeting - TBD

**April 10** General Meeting - TBD

**May 9 ?** Orcas Picnic / General Meeting - Moran State Park (Saturday!)

**June 12** General Meeting - TBD

**June 27-28** ARRL Field Day PDT: 6/27 11:00 - 6/28 13:59

**July 10** General Meeting - TBD

**August 14** General Meeting - TBD

**September 12 ?** Lopez Picnic / General Meeting - Odlin County Park (Saturday!)

**October 9** General Meeting - TBD

**November 13** General Meeting - TBD

**December 12** Christmas Feast / General Meeting / Elections - TBD (Saturday!)

**? Note:** Dates of Orcas Picnic and Lopez Picnic are pending further discussion at our next meeting.

Calendar has been posted to the SJCARS website:

<http://sjcars.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/SJCARS-Calendar-2020.pdf>

## Stories From the Shack

- Alan and a few others took the ICS 300 course put on by a former fire chief from San Francisco who acknowledged the importance of ham radio operators during emergencies. Very gratifying.
- Greg reminded everyone that MLK weekend is ARRL VHF contest, if anyone is interested in participating
- David mentioned that he's involved with his homeowners association, and that's a good way to talk about emergency preparedness.

## Meeting Close

The meeting was adjourned at 1:31 PM.

The next club meeting will be Friday February 14, 2020 at Mullis Fire Station, Friday Harbor, San Juan Island.

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**Please send additions, corrections or comments to:**

Elizabeth Menozzi  
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