

# *Socorro Amateur Radio Association*

www.socorroara.org

## Minutes of the SARA Meeting Emergency D-STAR session **February 29, 2012**

### Call to order:

7:30PM

Ray Calkins N0RBT presiding.

15 members present and 2 guests.

### Introductions:

Ed James – KA8JMW

Kathy James - KE5WKW

Prescott Grey introduced Ed James from the D-STAR seminar and Kathy, his daughter, who drove him down from Albuquerque.

### D-STAR presentation:

Prescott Grey passed out some documentation on some D-STAR related software called D-RATS.

Ed James gave a presentation on D-STAR that he condensed from the seminar. Points he covered included history, development, the AMBE proprietary codec, protocol, voice quality, digital data transfer, emergency applications, etc. He talked about what his club had to go through to get their repeater installed.

For more information Ed suggests <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/nm-dstar/>

Dave Johnson asked if the repeater would be useable in the event of the loss of internet connectivity. Ed said that the repeater would continue functioning as a stand-alone repeater.

Fred Hollis asked if D-STAR would be useful for passing images and video back to a command center in the event of an emergency. Ed said that even without a repeater, D-STAR can be used from point to point for data transfer. The repeater will increase the footprint. However, the data transfer rate on 70cm is not high enough to support video, only still images.

Vern Leavitt asked that if the club were to go ahead with the repeater installation, would we be able to get the reimbursement if there were unforeseen delays in the installation. Ed and Prescott said that Icom is understanding of extenuating circumstances and is flexible with the deadline .

Discussion:

Dave Johnson stressed that this would be a big undertaking. He recently talked with Joe Franklin and he reports that though the 146.68 repeater has been hosted for free by NMT, that is going to change. Dave says that the East peak where the repeater is is State Trust land and NMT has to pay the state and in turn has to charge us for usage of the building. Joe seems to be interested in charging by the amount of space that is used in the equipment racks. He understands that we are a non-profit and is willing to offer a reduction in price if SARA was willing to provide technical consulting for ISD on the mountain. Dave was able to come to a total annual rate of \$63 with a \$17 filing fee not including internet for a total of \$79 annually. If SARA did not perform the consulting then the price would be \$267 annually. The Prescott stressed that Dave himself would not be spearheading the consulting service. Dave estimates that an internet connection on the mountain will cost an additional \$21/mo. Fred Hollis said that he manages equipment in the same building and he offered to foot the bill for the internet.

Dave Johnson said that SARA should form the ISD consulting committee before the D-STAR decision is made since it is such an important. Prescott Grey, Ray Calkins, and Jim Boswell offered to help. Brad Smith volunteered to lead.

Jim Oty offered his support for the project but he pointed out, as a charter member of the club, that such projects should benefit the majority of the members and D-STAR does not. He can not afford a D-STAR radio and he doesn't think that the majority of the members would be able to either.

Al Braun said that he listens to the 146.68 repeater throughout most of the day and it receives very little activity. Dave Johnson said that he observed the same. Vern Leavitt pointed out that D-STAR is not a means to any end but just another tool available to all amateurs in the area.

Prescott Grey said that he estimated the total cost to be around \$4,000. \$3,000 would be reimbursed by Icom. Dave asked Prescott and Ray who put fourth money for the cause if they were hoping to receive reimbursement from the SARA. Prescott and Ray said that they had intended the money as a donation.

Ray said that Ryan emailed him saying that he had a rack mount server that he would be willing to donate for the cause. The shipping would cost \$50-\$60.

**Vern made a motion to go ahead and install the D-STAR.**

**The motion was refined to fund the \$3000 to Icom, which should be refunded, and \$1000 above and beyond what members are willing to donate for the installation of a D-STAR repeater.**

**For: 9 present and 5 proxy.**

**Against: 2 present and 3 proxy.**

**The motion passed.**

Adjournment: 9:30PM

Brad Smith KD5JNI  
Secretary