

# Alachua ARES/NFARC/NF4AC Clubs

## MINUTES

**October 8, 2025**

Attendance **16**: The meeting was at the Queen of Peace Catholic Community and via ZOOM. Meeting attendees are not specifically noted as attending live and in person or via ZOOM.

Gordon Gibby  
Leland Gallup  
Earl Sloane  
Earl McDow  
Mark McDow  
Jeff Capehart  
Rosemary Jones  
Brett Wallace  
Emily Wallace  
Roger Jordan  
Gray Moffett  
David Huckstep  
Manish Sahni  
Craig White  
Reid Tillery  
Brian Joy

### **Introductions.**

- 1. MINUTES APPROVED FOR SEPTEMBER 2025/PREVIOUS MONTH ARES HOURS REPORT.** KX4Z went over basic information such as the club web page and the typical monthly events we sponsor (for example, Lab N'Lunches, etc). Covered who are the 18(?) badged volunteers, four "new" crew that are waiting to be badged, including Angela Basham, Manish Sahni, Hugh Minnich, and Ron Lewis. Introductions around the room, including visitors from Levy and Marion counties. Many of the 18 are inactive, and some badged are not on the list on our website – we need a "vetted" list of badged folks. We need more people!!! September hours: 90. Details are in the screenshot that the EC sent to KX4Z. 34 hours for last months meeting, 12 hours for training, 12 hours for the exercise and the lab N'lunch. 32 hours for other activities (see KX4Z's email which was on the screen, and which may be published on the club's website, for details).
- 2. PROGRAM TOPIC #4. NFARC SECRETARY ANNOUNCEMENT AND ALACHUA COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING.** Minutes approved. AA3YB announced his retirement from all organized amateur radio activity no later than March 15, 2026. He will cease activities with ARES, the ARES/EOC clubs, GARS, and the County EM as a volunteer. He used that announcement to pose questions relevant to the group concerning what individuals and the group, as ARES, want to do in the time coming – especially in view of our ages and personal situations. AA3YB then went

through the MOU and told badged people that they could sign and give to him. Six meeting attendants signed: Brett Wallace, Earl Sloane, Earl McDow, Rosemary (Judith) Jones, Manish Sahni, and Craig White. David Huckstep, who ZOOMed into the meeting, asked how he could sign. AA3YB said “late signers” can call David Peaton and ask how they can return signed copy – by email as scans, or by DocuSign. David Huckstep, who ZOOMed into the meeting as he was in Arizona, prompted this discussion.

3. **OUR ARES HISTORY, EOC, AND OUR INVOLVEMENT GENERALLY.** KX4Z briefly described (based on information from Jim Bledsoe) how the ARES group came close to being excluded from the EOC. Other counties, such as Marion, found themselves disinclined (this is as an ARES group) from their EOC – hence, MERT was born. There are not a few county EOCs in Florida in which amateur radio volunteers are not welcome. Gordon Gibby recounted the pitiable state of ARES at the EOC eight years and more ago. He poses the question: it’s so different for us now, given that we are lauded by County Government and welcomed/integrated volunteers in County Emergency Management. Why is this so? Various meeting attendees offered opinions. According to Jeff Capehart, it is because we actually show up at the EOC. Earl Sloan says we train and are willing to work with them – they tell us what they want us to do and we do it. We now do Winlink, digital, etc – none of this did we do years ago. We do training. We activate and record volunteer hours that the County can use for some financial reimbursement in the aftermath of declared disasters. We publish books. We do HSEEP exercises. We do outreach at educational institutions. We do Field Days as HSEEP exercises; and so our proficiency as operators is much improved, and our ability to “speak” to the EM community is vastly improved. Creating a good relationship with the County took an enormous amount of work. Our ARES people are skilled in ICS forms, can build equipment, put up towers, assemble cables. We have – as a group – done training classes for all license levels. We are recognized and welcomed because we work. We have standardized Go-Boxes that resulted from David Huckstep W4JIR’s energy and connections with the Alachua County Sheriff’s Office. These Go-Boxes give us a standardized equipment platform to train on and to deploy with. Same is true with respect to the creation of an HF Go-Box that duplicates the HF station at the EOC. Our technical capability and close attention to building relationships with the EM community have resulted in our recognition and an exceptionally close working association with Alachua EM. From being almost thrown out eight years ago, we have so turned around the situation that we are now completely integrated in Emergency Management operations and planning.
4. **PROGRAM TOPIC #2. ARES® PROGRAM STIPULATIONS.** KX4Z went over the previous ARES taskbooks. He then described the new ARRL taskbook series. The previous Level One is now the “Basic” level -- which is very basic. Level Two has been superseded by the now-labeled “Intermediate.” Level Three is now the “Advanced” level. KX4Z stressed that our working relationship with the EM community is not just about task books, but is also more importantly about relationships. ARES® leadership must follow ARRL policies. This begs the question as to whether we agree with complying with the ARRL requirements, because EC and AECs are all required to be “Advanced” qualified. We are out of compliance, because our EC and some AECs (not certain how many Alachua AECs there are). We can’t just “call ourselves ARES” unless we are willing to comply. This sticking point is with respect to ECs/AECs being certified as having attained training at the Advanced levels. Emily Wallace says – we need to focus on solutions to the issue of ARES® training non-compliance. Earl Sloan asked – what is the advantage of being an ARES® group. KX4Z says we use the ARES® organizational relationship as fertile ground to raise up badged and more capable folks. We use ARES® to get

recognition. For nine years we've had a base level group that we've trained up. Very vigorous discussion ensued. Emily Wallace moved that all ECs and AECs must be in compliance within three months. Jeff Capehart says that the ARRL established two years as the time for compliance. Group considered this, but consensus was uncertainty that this is valid. Gray from Marion County pointed out that various ICS courses actually have an expiration date. Vote on the motion: Ten in favor in the room, with one abstention (AA3YB because he is retiring. David agreed, which brings us to eleven. One Zoom attendee (Brian Joy) abstained. Opposed? No opposition. Motion carries.

5. **PROGRAM TOPIC #3. ARRL AFFILIATED CLUB.** We have clubs because a "program" can't get insurance or a callsign. NFARC is affiliated with the ARRL. We are "active" because KX4Z fulfills that update every two years. He are further a Special Service Club because of all the infrastructure and training we do. KX4Z listed the requirements. Key point is to be under the jurisdiction to the ARRL to be an affiliated club. Motion passed that we should continue to be an affiliated club. Affiliation most useful in securing liability insurance via the ARRL connection.
6. **PROGRAM TOPIC #5 CURRENT TRAINING PROGRESS.** KX4Z walked through all the training we had done, including Lab N'Lunches, License training classes, etc., because "ARES® participants are active learners."
7. **PROGRAM TOPIC #6 UPDATE OF ANTENNA SITUATION AT NEW EOC.** Key point is that antennas are NOT part of the refurbishment contract These will need to be figured out afterwards, EM doesn't expect us to PAY. Of course we as individuals can donate. They need to know what we can advise on. So we'll have to work the issues of contract pour, tower assembly, etc. We probably won't get into the new facility until some time in the new year.
8. **PROGRAM TOPIC #7 MEETING TIMEKEEPER.** Brett Wallace volunteered.
9. **PROGRAM TOPIC #8.** Visitor report from Roger Jordan, EC with Levy County. He talked about outreach to amateurs who have not been "rolled into" active programs. Levy will put together a group to train instructors that can be sent out. The training will be for licensing, electronics training, and other projects – as an EC he thinks about ways to communicate beyond what the EOC does. Part of preparation is to use what what is already there by way of people and techniques to enhance our capabilities. Roger recommended APRS operation as well as packet radio. Where he is, everything west of I-75 is "dead." Getting new hams is one of the goals for developing training and ways of capturing interest among already licensed but not active in organizational terms. This will include "hands on" training." Licensing is just the start. Elmering is critical. ARES® is about "support the government," but that ignores the other needs that are out there for communications support. Brett Wallace pointed out that the new ARES® plan talks about supporting faith based organizations – in other words, ARES® communications support is not only about supporting government. Getting community amateur radio operators involved is important for all of the support models. "No reason" to be credentialed to be part of ARES® [Secretary note: not certain if I captured this correctly, as it does not make sense in view of the discussion above]. Roger wants to start programs to get amateurs involved; these can include training nets, use of radiograms. KX4Z let Roger know the extent of our County communications plan – that we have found that getting amateurs on the air is about getting people on the air. Briefed Roger on what works and what does not. We

do a lot of hands on radio. We briefed Roger on our weekly EOC activations, that we would help him get a SHARES license, so that might be a ticket in the door.

**10. ADJOURNMENT.** At 2038 EDT.