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To: All Wisconsin Amateur Radio Operators
 From: Chris W9JOL, Chairman
 Date: November 08, 2016
 re: The BIG update

Hello again, I am pleased to make several announcements today - all of which I think are positive!

First off, we are finally kicking off a round of periodic updates in order to get our database updated. I realize that it's a long time coming, but we had a lot of fixing to do this year, so it took a back seat for a while. Now that we're back on track, we expect the periodic updates to once again continue. Be looking for the update request, and please make sure to update it and promptly return it, because...

...it won't be long before our next membership meeting! This one will be important. It will be your chance to vote on the new policy changes that your board is proposing. It's the culmination of almost nine months of bi-weekly meetings, working to clarify our policies and bring them into the present-day. You'll find the proposed document by clicking this link. I encourage you to review the document and be prepared to vote at our next meeting. We can't get you the meeting notification if we don't have your correct contact information, so make sure it's up to date!

About the proposed policy changes - I want to make sure that we're clear on why we proposed these changes. As many of you are aware, spectrum everywhere is becoming scarce, even in the amateur bands. The upside of new technology is that it's making it easier than ever to put a repeater on the air. We want to be sure that everyone who wants to put a system together can, and that everyone is well protected and can operate in harmony. We want to make it easy to receive a coordination, and if issues arise, we want to be crystal clear about who holds what responsibilities and what the process is that goes into each coordination recommendation. The process should be completely transparent.

Let's not fool ourselves - our spectrum is valuable. If we don't use it (or if we don't use it in an efficient way with little need for FCC involvement) we'll lose it. Simple as that. In fact, our coordinator recognized the value of modeling well over a decade ago, and while the operational policy did not support those efforts, it was and is in fact the only way to gain better use of our spectrum. Adjacent state coordinators recognized this as well, and were benefited by the approach.

I think you'll agree that our policy is based on common sense, fair play, and best engineering practices. I also think that you'll agree that we're again setting the standard for professional, well-done repeater coordination in Wisconsin.

Next, I'd like to mention that whether or not I'm re-elected as Chairman (and this is not me campaigning, I promise!) I have recommended to the board that we bring back a second membership meeting that will be held in other parts of the state. The reality is that Milwaukee is a huge population center and a large portion of coordination's are held there, so it makes sense to hold a meeting in that area. However, there is no reason to not hold a meeting elsewhere in the state as well. I think that we need to get back to two meetings a year now that we've gotten caught up with the basic issues that we need to address. My hope is that will encourage more involvement and interaction with what we're trying to accomplish.

Please look for the meeting notice in the mail after the first of the year, and please PLEASE plan on being there. I would love to see a large crowd and have some engagement from our stakeholders.

And, as always, I encourage you to contact me at any time. My email is chairman@wi-repeaters.org.

Thank you, and 73.

Chris, W9JOL