



The Northern California Packet Association

The Digital Band Planning & Coordination Group of Northern California

Constitution of the Northern California Packet Association

This document shall serve as the CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS of the Northern California Packet Association, and may be referred to as either

PREAMBLE

The Northern California Packet Association was originally formed in the late 1980's to function as a "round-table" organization for the various Amateur Radio packet special interest groups in the region. With the increasing popularity of Amateur Radio packet at the time, the Association quickly became a general membership organization.

Apparently due to competition from the Internet, interest and participation in Amateur Radio packet started to wane in the late 1990's. Eventually, participation in the Association dropped to a level where it became necessary to revise these Bylaws in order to enable the Association to continue functioning efficiently. In 2003, it was decided to change the Association from a general membership organization into a committee structure, resembling its original format. In doing so, the main concern was to retain the open and democratic nature of the organization.

Article I Purpose

The Northern California Packet Association is a committee of packet special interest groups and others involved in Amateur Radio digital communications. The purpose of the Association is to foster the development of digital Amateur Radio communications in Northern California (approximately the top two-thirds of the state). This field is occupied foremost by Amateurs who, individually and in groups, make efforts to research, design, test, construct, operate, and use digital systems. These individuals and groups also make efforts to recruit and educate others in the field. All of these efforts can benefit from planning and coordination, and the Association provides the forum for such to take place. To achieve these goals the Association is organized to function as a working group, rather than as a social organization, and it shall, among other things, strive to do the following:

1. Improve the state of the art in the field of digital communications via Amateur Radio.
2. Encourage and educate interested persons and groups in the area of digital communications via Amateur Radio.
3. Encourage the construction, operation, and expansion of local, regional, national, and worldwide communications systems using digital methods via Amateur Radio.

4. Encourage the development of new and diverse methods of digital communications.
5. Bring together a cross-section of all the diverse interests in the field of Amateur Radio digital communications so all will have a voice and the opportunity to offer their knowledge, experience, talents, and goals to the benefit of the digital community.
6. Select frequencies for digital use through both general band planning and defining specific activities on digital channels. General band planning efforts include working with users and coordination groups for non-digital modes, with an aim to maximize the ability of the Amateur Radio Service to accomplish its purposes as set out in Federal Regulations.
7. Coordinate use of digital frequencies so that the goals of the digital community are best facilitated.
8. Represent the interests of the Northern California digital community in its contacts with others, such as regulatory bodies, coordination groups for non-digital modes, and digital coordination groups serving other geographical areas.
9. Perform all these activities in Northern California, plus in any contiguous areas of the digital users in those areas and as the Association should so decide.

Article II Members

- A. Any individual or bona fide Amateur Radio club or group involved in digital communications, band planning, or coordination of digital communications may become a Member upon making application and paying the dues. The Association shall make every effort to include at least one representative from each known digital special interest group within the Association's territory. If there is no representative for a particular digital special interest group or no one from that group wishes to participate, the Association is not required to operate as if it has a vacant seat, nor will this affect the achievement of a quorum.
- B. Memberships run from the time of joining until the same date the following year. Memberships automatically expire unless renewal dues are submitted. Membership may be denied or revoked for cause. "Cause" is defined as conduct by the Member inimical to the Association's interest, and shall include, among other things, the inability to work with others in carrying out the Association's purposes.
- C. Each bona fide Amateur Radio club or group which joins the Association shall designate a person to act as their representative. A club may also designate an alternate to serve if its representative is absent. Such designations shall become effective when the Secretary is notified of them by the club or group, and they shall remain in effect until the Secretary is notified otherwise.
- D. Each individual Member and each representative (or alternate) of each club or group which is a Member shall have one vote at Meetings of the Association.
- E. All records of the Association shall be open to the inspection of any Member. Any Member shall have the right to timely copies of such records at cost and in any reasonable format requested. Only information in the nature of access codes or passwords may be withheld from such a request.

F. Lists of names of Members, as well as other information provided by the Association from its records, shall be used only for internal matters concerning the Association or the digital community it serves. Such lists shall not be used for solicitation by other associations, for publication, or for commercial purposes of any kind. This restriction may be waived upon two-thirds vote, but each Member retains the right to disallow their name to be included in any such distribution.

G. Amateur radio operators may band together to form Special Interest Groups in cases where they share an interest in a specific aspect of digital communications. They may select individuals to represent their group in the Association.

H. Secondary Members. Individuals merely interested in digital communications may join in a secondary capacity and thereby achieve greater participation in the Association's activities. Secondary members may not have voting rights nor count towards a quorum, but the Association shall make every effort to obtain and fairly weigh their opinion before making decisions. Secondary Members are not necessarily subject to the Member duties, rights, and provisions mentioned elsewhere in these Bylaws. Secondary Members may not be required to pay dues unless they cause the Association to incur some costs related to their participation (such as receiving the newsletter).

I. Dues shall not be excessively more than that reasonably needed to keep the Association solvent. The Membership may vote to waive dues in some cases, including but not limited to instances in which the paying of dues is a significant impediment to the participation of a recognized digital special interest group.

Article III Committee Structure

A. The Association shall be run as a committee which, at a minimum, shall consist of representatives from each of the various recognized digital special interests in the Association's territory. For purposes of achieving a quorum, if any such group chooses not to participate, the Association may proceed as if that group doesn't exist.

B Meetings shall be held in Northern California unless at least two-thirds of the members agree otherwise. Meetings may be called by any three Members. To have a Meeting, each Member must have been notified, as per Article VI, of it or have waived the right to notice.

C The Association may elect to meet electronically (e.g. internet remailer) so long as all Members who wish to participate have approximately equal access. Such meetings may occur often and deal with single issues as they come up. As far as is practical, every effort must be made to make such meetings as open and accessible as face-to-face meetings.

E. If the number of voting members ever consists of fewer than three, the Association shall be considered dormant, in which case the remaining members should make a good-faith effort to fill the vacant seats with reasonable candidates. If this dormancy lasts for ninety days or more, each member may have their membership expiration frozen as of the date the Association went dormant.

Article IV Officers

- A. Officers shall be elected by the membership. The Officers shall carry out the day-to-day management of the affairs of the Association in accordance with direction given them by the membership.
- B. The Association shall have the following Officers with duties as follows:
1. The President shall run Association meetings. His primary function is to coordinate. He shall strive to get other people to do as much as possible and thus increase involvement by others
 2. The Vice President shall assist the President and shall perform the President's work if the President is absent.
 3. The Secretary shall keep the Association's records, except financial and property records. He shall keep minutes of meetings and issue Association correspondence.
 4. The Treasurer shall handle the Association's money. He shall make reports on the Association's financial condition as needed. He shall keep an inventory of any materials owned by or on loan to the Association.
- C. In addition to the duties specifically listed, each Officer shall have the duties attributed to his office by custom or law.
- D. The Membership may designate individuals or committees to assist in specific duties (Appointees). Technical committees, frequency coordinators, web-master, newsletter editor, and the like are examples. The Membership shall specify the extent of the authority of such Appointees in the motion appointing them.
- E. Officers and Appointees serve at the pleasure of the Membership, and the Membership may dismiss such persons from their positions and/or redefine their authority at any time. The term of Officers and Appointees is one year, or as specified by the Membership.

Article V Meetings

- A. There shall be at least one General Meeting held each year. Additional Meetings may be held during the year upon petition of the members per paragraph C of this article.
- B. Meetings may be held on-line (electronically) or in any other similar non face-to-face format so long as each attendee has approximately equal access.
- C. Any three Members may submit to the Secretary a petition calling a Meeting. The petition shall state the date (at least thirty three days hence), time, place, and topics to be discussed. If the Secretary's office is vacant or he is not available, delivery of the petition to another Officer shall suffice.
- D. Items of business may be brought before a Meeting without prior notice; however, thirty days prior notice is required for actions to amend this Constitution or to revoke a membership in the Association.

E. Fifteen percent of the Membership, but at least half of the members representing recognized digital special interest groups (one each), must be present at a Meeting to constitute a quorum. A majority of the Members voting on a measure is required for it to pass. EXCEPTION: Two-thirds of those voting is needed to amend this Constitution, or revoke a membership in the Association.

F. Members who are unable to attend a Meeting, but wish to vote on any issue, may submit their proxy to the Secretary. The Secretary must have possession of all such proxies prior to the vote.

G. If a vote is pending and there is no quorum, the Secretary shall solicit the votes of the Membership in a timely manner, (acceptable methods include, but are not limited to mail, e-mail, telephone, packet, fax, etc.). If all current members have been so notified and have had a reasonable opportunity to vote, that constitutes a quorum.

Article VI Required Notice

- A. Notice of Meetings must be sent to all Members by newsletter or other notification, including but not limited to: mail, e-mail, telephone, packet, fax, etc. thirty days before the Meeting. If the newsletter is published on-line (i.e. available as a web page on the internet), it is considered to be "sent" once it is available on the internet. However, to assure that the Members will see on-line notices of meetings, notification shall be sent within three days, by a reasonably sure and quick method, including but not limited to: e-mail, telephone, fax, etc., advising them that the on-line newsletter or notice has been updated with new important information. New Members shall be informed as to the web address (URL) of any on-line newsletter or notice, current Members may also be re-notified from time to time.
- B. If action to remove a Member from the Association is to occur, written notice must be put in the mail to the affected party at least fifteen days beforehand, so that he can have his say at the Meeting where the vote is to be taken. Temporary actions of this type may be taken without notice in an emergency, but no final action may be taken without it.

Article VII Amendments

Amendments may be made to this Constitution by the Members. Proposed Amendments shall be set out in full in the newsletter or similar notice preceding the Meeting at which the vote is to be taken. Notice to all Members shall be given as per Article VI at least thirty days before such meeting.

Article VIII Implementation

This Constitution shall become effective and will supersede all previous versions when approved by the Membership at the 2003 Annual Meeting. Approved unanimously by the membership at the General Meeting October 18, 2003.

Voted and approved, NCPA General Meeting, Saturday, October 18, 2003.