

COMARA Board Meeting Minutes
January 23, 2024

Attendees (held virtually, via Zoom):

Maury Mechanick	Dan DiFonzo
Kim Baumgartner	Richard Rankin
Roger Cochetti	Geza Serenyi
Denis Curtin	

Adoption of Agenda/Approval of Minutes

Following adoption of the agenda, the Board approved the Minutes for the September 12, 2023 meeting.

Treasurer’s Report and Membership Update

The Treasurer’s Report covered the time period from September 12, 2023 through the end of the year. Expenses for 2023 year to date came to \$1914 (website hosting company fee; P.O. Box rental; liability insurance; and Word Press/Constant Contact fee) and income came to \$420, reflecting dues payments for 94 members. The value of the COMARA Fidelity account was \$52,901 and total assets were \$61,839, including bank balance, Paypal balance and the Fidelity account.

LMCO Benefits

No issues regarding LMCO benefits were noted.

Website an Web Hosting Arrangements.

The Board approved an additional expenditure of up to \$2500 for improvements intended to improve the ability of members to access and use the website and for website administrators to update and manage the website.

Status of the I Remember COMSAT Project and Wikipedia Update and Preservation of Labs Building

Work on finalizing the first edition of the I Remember COMSAT Project and updates to Wikipedia entry for COMSAT Corporation and creation of a Wikipedia entry for COMSAT Labs is ongoing. In connection with Montgomery County's ongoing Master Plan review for the Clarksburg, MD area, interest has been expressed in the possible designation of the COMSAT Labs Building as a historic structure in Montgomery County and its preservation as such. COMARA is working with Montgomery County planning officials to provide additional information to them on the historic significant of the research conducted at COMSAT Labs with respect to the development of the satellite industry as well as other technological developments in the telecommunications arena. Based on helpful comments by both Roger Cochetti and Dan DeFonzo, particular emphasis should be placed on the role that COMSAT Labs played in furthering key U.S. policy objectives dating back to the 1960s regarding the sharing of satellite technology with the rest of the world and serving in effect as the primary location for which satellite related research was conducted during that time period.

Social Activities for 2024

Given the success of the most recent First Wednesday of December event, the Board felt there was strong interest continuing the event in future years. Additionally, COMARA will again join with the Intelsat Retirees and Alumni Association (IRAA) in jointly sponsoring the annual picnic to be held in May 2024 and will conduct a virtual annual meeting in the September timeframe. Further consideration will be given over the course of the year to whether there is sufficient membership interest in attending an in person annual meeting as well; given the level of attendance at the most recent in person annual meeting, it is beginning to appear as though this is not viewed as an event of importance to the membership, particularly given the option of attending and participating in a virtual annual meeting as well.

Satellite Gallery at the National Electronics Museum Project

No further updated information available at this time.

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The next Board meeting will take place on Tuesday, May 7 2024 at 11:30 am.
The meeting adjourned about 12:300 pm.

Submitted by: Maury Mechanick