

COMARA Board Meeting Minutes
March 25, 2025

Attendees (held virtually, via Zoom):

Maury Mechanick	David Lee
Kim Baumgartner	Richard Rankin
Roger Cochetti	Geza Serenyi
Dan DiFonzo	

Adoption of Agenda/Approval of Minutes

Following adoption of the agenda, the Board noted that September 2024 meeting had been primarily social and no minutes had been submitted.

Treasurer’s Reports and Membership Update

A Treasurer’s Report was submitted covering the time period from through year-end 2024, and then a second Report was submitted covering the time period from January 1, 2025 through March 25, 2025. Expenses for calendar year 2024 came to \$3850 (web development; liability insurance; P.O. Box rental; Word Press/Constant Contact and Paypal fees) and income came to \$1905, reflecting dues payments for 71 members. Expenses exceeded income for the year by \$1,945. Expenses for 2025 year to date (March 25, 2025) came to \$593 (P.O. Box rental; and website hosting/Constant Contact fee) and income came to \$180, reflecting dues payments for 7 members. The value of the COMARA Fidelity account as of May 25, 2025 was \$61,254 and total assets were \$70,056, including bank balance, Paypal balance and the Fidelity account.

LMCO Benefits

No issues regarding LMCO benefits were noted.

Website and Web Hosting Arrangements.

The improvements intended to improve the ability of members to access and use the website and for website administrators to update and manage the website have been made.

Status of the I Remember COMSAT Project; Wikipedia Update; Preservation of Labs Building and Other Historical Matters

Work on updates to Wikipedia entry for COMSAT Corporation and possible creation of a Wikipedia entry for COMSAT Labs is ongoing. COMARA is continuing to interface with Montgomery County planning officials to provide additional information to them on the historic significance of the research conducted at COMSAT Labs, including a written submission addressing the historical significance of COMSAT Labs and the Clarksburg site. The historic preservation staff within Montgomery County Planning Board have supported a historic designation for the Clarksburg building, but the development staff with Montgomery County Planning Board have not agreed with that recommendation, and it will be up to the full Planning Board to make a decision one way or the other. A message will be sent to all COMARA members on April 6, 2025, commemorating the 60th Anniversary of the launch of the Early Bird satellite.

Social Activities for 2025

There continues to be strong interest in the First Wednesday of December event, with attendance at the most recent one close to 40 attendees, and with that level of interest, the event should again be hosted in 2025. Additionally, COMARA will again join with the Intelsat Retirees and Alumni Association (IRAA) in jointly sponsoring the annual picnic to be held on May 18, 2025, and will conduct a virtual annual meeting in the September/October timeframe. It appears clear that there no longer is sufficient membership interest in attending an in person annual meeting as well.

Satellite Gallery at the National Electronics Museum Project

The National Electronics Museum has now re-opened on a scaled-back basis at the new Hunt Valley site.

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The next Board meeting will take place in the June/July timeframe at a date to be set.

The meeting adjourned about 12:30 pm.

Submitted by: Maury Mechanick