

DRONE FLYERS CLUB of The Villages, FL

P.O. Box 51

Wildwood, FL, 34785-9998



Meeting Minutes of February 19, 2026

CALL TO ORDER: President John Hawley called the February 19, 2026 meeting to order at 18:30 hours

Hawley welcomed the members and this evening's guests to the meeting.

Guests in attendance were Marc Cecilio, Paul Cecilio, Tim Cox, Rick Detwiller, Marty Hanrahan, Susan Justus, Walter Lamore, Ralph Rapier, Garry Rizzo, Art Schlangen, Brad Weisbrod, and Curt Wuellner.

New members this evening were Rick Detwiller, Walter Lamore, Art Schlangen, David Vestrant, and Brad Weisbrod.

There were a total of 46 members and 7 guests in attendance.

Hawley presented name tags to the Club's most recent members and reminded the group to pick up their name tags if they had not yet received one.

CLUB OFFICERS

President's Report: John Hawley

Lifestyle Expo: Second Friday each month. Fun time and meet several persons interested in drone flying. The Club would appreciate your volunteering to assist. We break this into two shifts

Outdoor Expo: This Expo, Feb 27 & 28. Will be at Everglades multi purpose field. Several people are needed for each of the two shifts each day. Will be many opportunities throughout the day to fly and demonstrate. Sign-up is available

New brochures: Hawley presented copies of the new Club brochures to those in attendance,

Outreach:

- Possible inside video with FPV of Village's woodworking shops, new shop soon and the older one in the future
- Tunnel to Towers: May 7, Harbor Hills Country Club in Lady Lake. We need pilots (or under supervision of 107 pilot) for 6:30/7:30 shotgun and 12:30/1:00 shotgun starts.

Vice President Report: Jim Daunis

Club Picnic: Our spring Club picnic will be held on March 21. It will again be held at the Everglades Pavillion. Cost is \$5 each for members and guests and Club picks up the balance! Hamburgers, hotdogs, and flying!

Secretary's Report: Randy Justus

Membership Dues: Today was the last day to pay 2026 membership dues. A final reminder will be sent to those not yet paid. Our membership now consists of 104 people.

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Minutes of the January 15, 2026 Meeting: Minutes of the January 15 meeting were emailed to our membership in late January. No requests for additions, corrections, or modifications were received. President Hawley asked for a motion to approve the January 15 minutes.

Motion and second to approve the minutes of the January 15, 2026 meeting as distributed..

Motion approved by voice vote.

Justus reminded those present that the Club needs volunteers to assist with this month's Expos.

- **Lifestyle Expo** for new residents will be held on March 13. We have volunteers for the morning shift (08:30 – 11:45) but none yet for the afternoon shift (11:45 – 15:00 hours). Members that participated in this Expo reported having a great time introducing visitors to the Club and discussing drones in general. A light breakfast and lunch are provided to those staffing our table. Contact Justus if you can assist.
- **Outdoor Expo** for all residents will be a two-day event (February 27 and 28). We need assistance as there will be set-up, drone flying and an information table. Both days will have two shifts; one from 09:45 until 12:30 and a second shift from 12:15 to 15:00. Last year we had many visitors and interested people resulting in growth for the Club. A light lunch will be provided. Contact Justus if you can assist.

Treasurer's Report: Acting Treasurer Randy Justus presented the January 2026 Treasurer's Report:

Opening Balance on January 1, 2026 : \$4,653.97

Deposits:

Dues:	\$960.00
50/50 Drawing:	\$92.00
Hat Sales:	\$90.00
Picnic:	\$10.00
TOTAL INCOME:	\$1,152.00

Expenses:

Name Tags:	\$97.37
Checks:	\$29.18
TOTAL EXPENSES:	\$126.55

BALANCE ON February 1, 2026: \$5,679.41

Motion and second to approve the January 31, 2026 treasurers report as presented.

Motion approved by voice vote.

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NEW BUSINESS:

Executive Board Meeting: The Executive Board met on February 8. Discussion included the following topics:

- Creation of an "Accident Report" that would be used for drone accidents at Club sponsored flying events.
- The FAA Trust Exam and ensuring all members were compliant.
- The FAA 107 license for members
- Club picnic preparation
- Expo participation and planning
- Renewal of the Clubs postal box
- FAA recent letter regarding criminal and civil issues
- Potential unmanned flying presentation with AMA group
- Club brochure update

ALLEN'S CORNER, Allen Wan:

Wan discussed drones and how they were used in the Olympics. He reported that the FPV type drones used were specially constructed FPV type drones weighing and having a top speed of 90 MPH. Allen showed his FPV drones similar to the ones used in the Olympics. He also showed pictures and videos of these drones being used to capture close in views of the athlete(s) and taking tracking shots, all done safely and always behind the participant. He also discussed the numerous spotters used to maintain safety. The drones used had no prop guards due to special license issues. The drones were never flown over people and were manually flown without the use of GPS. No hovering was used as the drones would not be able to be controlled. The drones worked well in snow and rain as the result of special insulation allowing them to be flown in rain or shine. The cost per drone was \$300 to \$400 each with the camera being much more costly than the drone.

DON'S CORNER, Don Wiley:

Wiley discussed a recent letter sent to FAA employees by FAA Director Brian Bedform regarding the FAA *Compliance and Enforcement* Program. Key points were:

- Ensuring aircraft are registered and markings applied before any operation
- Following updated distance and altitude restrictions
- Mandatory timelines for remote ID equipment and broadcast requirements
- Maintain current certifications and submit required incident activity reports
- Potential to add current lighter weight drones to regulation

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- Working with law enforcement and air traffic management identifying drones and operators
- Mandatory inspections and schedules to reduce mechanical failures
- Increasing the maximum civil penalty to \$30,000
- Increased monitoring using AI, Radar, real-time risk assessment

Wiley summarized the presentation by reminding us that the goal is increased safety in operations and security. This update is designed to punish those that endanger the public, violate airspace restrictions, or operate a drone in furtherance or element of another crime. Pilots should avoid flying over people, operating beyond visual line of sight, avoid creating undue hazard to persons or property or weaponizing a drone. Pilots should also use remote ID as required, avoid controlled airspace (airports/air traffic patterns), restricted areas, and be aware of NOTAMs. Since this bulletin was released, there has been a 15% increase in enforcement actions. The bottom line is fly safely and follow the rules.

CRASH OF THE MONTH AWARD(S)

No *outdoor* crashes were reported during the past month.

MEMBER DISCUSSION

Drones for Sale: There were no drones announced for sale by any of the members present.

New Drones Acquired: None

Member Videos:

Ted Mitrou presented a video of a recent Hollywood Beach vacation. Nice job Ted!

SAFETY: Club Safety Officer John Egan:

ACCIDENT report.

ADD regular safety

FLYING DAY REMINDERS:

- Tuesday: Soaring Eagle Softball Field, between 08:00 and 10:50
- Wednesday: First Responders Recreation Center, between 08:00 and 11:50
- Thursday: Olympia (near Eastport) between 08:00 and 11:50

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- Saturday: Everglades Recreation Center (Soccer Field) between 9:00 and Noon

50/50 DRAWING: The lucky winner of tonight's 50/50 drawing for \$ 35 was won by Scott Long. Congratulation Scott.

NEXT MEETING(S):

- **Business Meeting:** The next business will be held on March 19, at 18:30 hours (*3rd Thursday*). Rohan Recreation Center.
- **Training Session:** Training will be held on February 26 at 18:30 hours (*4th Thursday*). This session will be held at the Rohan Recreation Center. Video editing

ADJOURNMENT: With no additional business being brought forward, President Hawley adjourned the meeting at 19:59 hours.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Justus

Randy Justus, Secretary

