

## Tenth Month Minutes Business Meeting

### Asheville Friends Meeting

October 8, 2006

11:45 AM opening reading

*I want to emphasize the importance of the Friends business meeting in the life of the faithful Friend. One could argue that the business meeting is at least as important as the meeting for worship, for it is the actual demonstration of the New Testament vision of a fellowship guided by, and obeying, the Spirit. The meeting for worship alone can be (though it should not be) a matter of private salvation or private experience without significant changes in life, behavior, commitment, or sacrifice. On the other hand, the meeting for business, if it be Spirit-filled and properly understood, is a hands-on, laboratory-filled experience in which the whole fellowship comes face to face with the Spirit's demands for the sacrifice of time, treasure, convenience, and prejudice.*

*When opinions differ widely and the need for spiritual discernment becomes crucial, the best are driven, as never in a meeting for worship, to seek that Spirit which can sustain harmony while waiting for the right leading. Thus, God's work among us becomes more real and faith is both tested and strengthened in the business meeting.*

*We can be severely tested by two ever present and very real hazards in the Friends business method; impatience and a vacuous boredom. The Friend who recognizes that these hazards can be a spiritual call to go deeper into worship brings great power to the work of the church as well as an opening of his or her own spiritual gifts, including discernment. Thus the Friends business meeting cannot be described as just the peculiar Quaker form of getting things done; rather it should be seen as an essential part of the spiritual formation and the spiritual growth of every seasoned Friend, for it is that place through which we learn to walk hand in hand with each other and the Spirit out into the world to do the work of committed and obedient disciples.*

— William Taber, Jr. "Friends Consultation on Discernment"

#### Worship

#### Attendance

Kitty Reynolds, Margaret Normile, George Gjelfriend, Sam Rizzo, Rebecca Fitzsimmon, Jim Cavener, Alan Robinson, Eda Smith, Gerald Smith, Ellen Frerotte, Philip Neal, Katherine Kowal, David Clements, Gary Briggs, Stephen Houseworth, Barbara Esther, Adrienne Weir.

Clerk—Steve Livingston

Recording Clerk—Lynnora Bierce

#### Introductions/News of Ourselves

Welcome back to Steve Houseworth.

Rebecca Fitzsimmon introduced herself, and is attending meeting for business for the second time, and has been attending for about a year and a half.

## Review and Approval of Agenda

### **Approved with Changes**

With a note to resume using the numbered month rather than the English month for description of the monthly minutes. So noted.

A Friend asked if a called meeting for the queries on Marriage Procedure would come up for scheduling during this meeting. Clerk said it may come up, and some Friends stated in unison, "It just did."

## Review and Approval of Ninth Month Minutes

### **Approved with Changes**

### 12:00 Finance Committee

#### **Asheville Friends Meeting Finance Committee, Report to Business Meeting, October 8, 2006, draft**

1. Satchel Loftis has asked to be released as Bookkeeper for Meeting. We have asked the Treasurer, Palin Spruance, to assume the duties of Bookkeeper as well for the time being. Thanks to Satchel for his two years of service as Bookkeeper.
2. The Finance Committee has approved expenditures from the Advertising budget line for expenses previously incurred (for the Friends Journal ad). Currently Meeting has not designated any committee or person to supervise expenditures from this budget line. The responsibility was recently that of the Ministry and Counsel Committee. The Finance Committee recommends that Meeting consider who it would like to supervise this budget line, or consider discontinuing the budget line if no suitable supervisor can be found.
3. The Finance Committee was asked by Ministry and Counsel to approve expenses for the First Day Transition Committee. The September Business Meeting had approved making the transition, shepherded by the Transition Committee, but did not approve any money to be used for the transition. The Finance Committee agreed with the suggestion of the Ministry and Counsel Committee that it was appropriate for the Transition Committee to spend up to \$400 from the Contingency Budget line. However, we note that no individual or committee has ever been given the authority by Meeting to approve expenditures. The Finance Committee is discussing bringing to Meeting a proposal for a policy which would allow the Finance Committee Clerk, in consultation with the Meeting Clerk, to authorize expenditures in emergency or urgent situations, with notification to the subsequent Business Meeting. We would like from Meeting:
  - i. Confirmation of the \$400 expenditure for the Transition from the Contingency Budget line.
  - ii. Comments regarding whether any persons or committees of Meeting should have the

authority to approve expenditures not yet authorized by meeting; under what circumstances; and who the persons or committees should be.

Respectfully submitted, David Clements, Acting Clerk

**Action: approve \$400 expenditure from contingency fund for transition to new schedule, with oversight to Ad Hoc First Day Structure committee.**

**Approved**

Report was accepted.

Discussion: advertising budget oversight, authority for non-line item expenditures

12:25 Retreat Committee

#### AD HOC RETREAT COMMITTEE REPORT

The Asheville Friends Meeting One Day Retreat was held at Common Light Meetingplace on September 23, 2006. Retreat Committee members included Katherine Kowal who provided valuable assistance in planning, and bought, prepared and served the food, (including dozens of her muffins), for lunch and during the day. Carrie Coward gave excellent suggestions regarding the organization of the retreat based on her past retreat experience, and spent many hours in handling the registration. David Clements provided the initial suggestion of a one-day retreat, gave good suggestions regarding finances, provided child-care, and helped in cleaning up the facility after the retreat. Laura Maynard and Ellen Frerotte assisted in the kitchen in preparing, serving, and cleaning up.

Joyce Rawlings-Davies was a member of the committee, met with us on a regular basis, and provided sound advice. She was the Retreat Facilitator, and presented a very meaningful day of spiritual enrichment. "Deepening Our Mystical Roots" was the theme of the Retreat, and Joyce, with input from those present, discussed mysticism from the Quaker view as well as other spiritual disciplines. She provided time for individual introspection, as well as sharing time with one other person and then with a group. Thus, through various exercises during the day, one was led to a deeper understanding of one's spiritual roots. Joyce's training and experience as a spiritual retreat facilitator was most evident and appreciated.

The Ad Hoc Retreat Committee agreed that no expense would come from the Meeting for the Retreat, and that it would pay for itself. The Retreat expenses totaled \$671.87. The sum of \$660.00 has been collected, leaving a balance of \$11.87 over what we collected. In the event that more money is donated by those who had signed up, but did not attend, this \$11.87 will be eradicated. Keeping the costs down was accomplished by paying minimal rent, shopping, preparing and serving food ourselves, and by Joyce's willingness to accept a minimal honorarium in light of her membership in Asheville Friends Meeting. The hours that members of the committee willingly contributed cannot be measured in monetary terms.

In light of the accomplishment of our goal, the Ad Hoc Retreat Committee wishes to be laid down by the Meeting.

Margaret Normile, Clerk

**Action: laying down of ad hoc 2006 retreat planning committee**

**Approved**

**Asheville Friends Meeting minutes our 'thank you' for our one-day Retreat held on September 23 in Black Mountain. We extend our appreciation to our retreat planning committee, to its Clerk, to those Friends who provided many kinds of legwork, to those who made and obtained our good food, and to all f/Friends who gathered to share and deepen our spiritual life. We particularly thank our Friend Joyce Rawlings-Davies for her caring and sensitive retreat leadership, that we may renew/experience new individual-corporate meaning from our spiritual roots.**

**Approved**

Report accepted

12:45 Ministry and Counsel

Report of the Ministry and Counsel Committee

October 8, 2006

The committee would like to thank all those working to prepare for our schedule change coming up in two weeks. Ministry and Counsel Committee, with Ellen Frerotte's help in printing and distribution, has notified all local Friends on our mailing list of that schedule change. The committee also plans to place one or more signs in strategic places to remind Friends when the transition from Religious Education to worship takes place that we will hold the silence in our main worship space, inviting others to begin that quiet transition as they enter the space and respect it in the peripheral space.

We discussed briefly the role of singing, concluding that we had no clear leading, but hoped we could respond if a need arose. (We can note that the Spiritual Enrichment Committee planned that at least one first hour in Twelfth Month, Christmas Eve, be dedicated to our singing together.)

The committee discussed the scheduling of the Meeting for Worship for the Conduct of Business, but wants our clerk to have time to discern a change with which he's comfortable. The November 12 business meeting would be our first opportunity to fit a change into our new schedule.

Action Item: The Ministry and Counsel Committee recommends that the meeting approve the grant of \$1,050 to Stephanie Gossett to assist her in her Earlham College education during the 2006-2007 academic year. This would allow Stephanie to lower the number of hours she has to work on campus, thus freeing up more time to dedicate to study and protecting her continued good health.

**Action: approve allocation of a total of \$1050 from the College Age Friends Support Fund to support Stephanie Gossett in the Fall 2006 and Spring 2007 semester.**

1:05 Spiritual Enrichment

Spiritual Enrichment Committee

Minutes

Wednesday, September 27, 2006

Present: Ellen Frerotte, Steve Livingston, Satchel Loftis, Laura Maynard, Peter Buck and Evan Richardson

[NOTE: The highlighting notes where there is an action that is pending and identifies who agreed to follow through with the action.]

We decided that Called Meetings are better scheduled at different times than before meeting, or at least, very rarely before meeting.

We discussed the role of singing in our schedule and acknowledged that there is no true consensus about it – some find it centering/enjoyable and others find it to be distracting. We decided to suggest the following: First hour begins with an announcement that following the program folks are invited to remain in the meeting room for singing. The announcement will also invite folks who would like to continue talking to do so outside of the meeting rooms, so that we can honor keeping a worshipful presence during the transition time. The person who is signed up to break meeting will be asked to explicitly mark the end of singing at 10:25ish, in order to prepare us to enter into worship at 10:30. Also, we need to begin announcing this expectation at the rise of meeting before 10/22 and continue it for a while so that folks that come to meeting just for worship are aware of it as well.

We spent some time brainstorming a list of possible offerings which included:

- Working with the faith and practice queries
- Forums.
- Basic Quaker History, perhaps using the George Fox video, perhaps using the Quakerism 101 series.
- Rex Ambler-based focusing meditation, working with the CDs.
- Psychology/Anthropology of Mysticism – Peter Buck offering
- Bible Study
- Book Study
- Music – more structured singing.
- Sharing of spiritual journeys.

- Exploration of the testimonies.
- Simplicity circle.

We discussed planning for some concurrent sessions, with one of the two offerings definitely being a one-session offering that does not build on repeated attendance or any prior work to be done. We also liked the idea of creating a structure for types of offerings that would repeat itself throughout the 3 months, to create a sense of routine. We will try to be flexible about where to host the offerings based on attendance but plan to not alter the schedule until after the 3 months is up, based on feedback from the community. We decided to ask the person breaking meeting to announce what is coming up the following week and to ask for a show of hands on who is planning on attending which of the offerings available (even if there is only one) – this practice will help us know where to place as well as help to promote the different offerings.

Our proposed schedule:

(4<sup>th</sup> Sunday) 10/22:

Introduction to Sharing our Spiritual beginning with a series of queries about our spiritual concepts/beliefs/practices that folks can answer in a more physical way to show to each other where we are similar and different and to have some time for sharing about our answers. Then, the last part of the time could focus on the plan for scheduling 2 folks for each 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday to offer sharing about their personal spiritual journeys to the Meeting. Come up with a few queries to offer as a structure for those folks who would appreciate this, but not as an absolute guide.

- (5<sup>th</sup> Sunday) 10/29 Singing Sacred Rounds
- (1<sup>st</sup> Sunday) 11/5 Sharing on Faith and Practice Queries
- (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday) 11/12 Meeting for Business
- (3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday) 11/19 Rex Ambler, working with the CDs
- (4<sup>th</sup> Sunday) 11/26 (THANKSGIVING WEEKEND) Sharing our Spiritual Journeys
- (1<sup>st</sup> Sunday) 12/3 Sharing on Faith and Practice Queries – Steve and Laura
- (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday) 12/10 Meeting for Business
- (3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday) 12/17 Rex Ambler – Satchel
- (4<sup>th</sup> Sunday) 12/24 (CHRISTMAS EVE) Sharing our Spiritual Journeys
- (5<sup>th</sup> Sunday) 12/31 Singing Songs for the Season – Evan
- (1<sup>st</sup> Sunday) 1/7 Sharing on Faith and Practice Queries – Steve and Laura

Peter Buck will begin offering Bible Study two Sundays each month. He will move back and forth between focusing on the Gospel of Mark and exploring themes, perhaps starting with “the real trash”, such as The Rapture and Final Judgment Day. He will begin these in November and

get back to us about the specifics so we can begin announcing it. These sessions will be concurrent to the above scheduled sessions.

**action: approve schedule for Adult Spiritual Enrichment**

**Approved with thanks**

Discussion: placement of singing in our first day schedule

Regarding 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday singing during first hour: Although in December first hour singing will also be offered on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday as it is Christmas Eve.

**Approved**

Discussion: first hour activity on 12/24 – singing or sharing spiritual journeys?

Joy and Kittie to make up of the Committee for Holiday Event.

Accepted the Report

2:11 Representative Meeting Report

### **Report of the SAYMA Representative Meeting**

**Berea, Kentucky on Sept. 10, 2006**

There are 6 points to pass on to Asheville Friends Meeting from the day's business at the Berea Representative Meeting of the Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association (SAYMA):

1. We are hosting SAYMA's next representative meeting. We need to organize hospitality for Friday, December 1 and Saturday, December 2 as well as a noon meal on Saturday for Friends. Swannanoa Valley Friends may be able to help us with this task. The April representative meeting will be hosted by Nashville Friends. While I have represented the monthly meeting for some time, every Friend is welcome to attend the meetings. I hope those of you interested will register to attend and get to know a larger group of Quakers a little better. The meeting needs to appoint a group of Friends to organize hospitality and Saturday lunch for the December 2, 2006, representative meeting to be held in our meetinghouse.
2. Several opportunities are available to Friends to serve our yearly meeting: editor of the quarterly Southern Appalachian Friend; Assistant Treasurer to train under the current Treasurer, Dennis Gregg, for the position of Treasurer next year; local arrangements person to train under Steve Livingston; Faith and Practice Ad Hoc Revision Committee member; Peace and Social Concerns Committee member and Personnel Committee member. Our meeting also has an opportunity to serve on the Ministry and Nurture Committee if any member is moved to do so.
3. Ecological Concerns Network (ECN) is looking for a meeting contact person for each monthly meeting. Anyone interested can contact Roy Taylor at [wrldeas@mindspring.com](mailto:wrldeas@mindspring.com)

4. We heard a moving report from Friends who attended the QUIT conference: Quaker Initiative to End Torture. A second conference is planned for June 1-3, 2007. Two books were recommended for meeting use as resources: *Trauma Recovery* by Judith Herman and *Answering Terror*, a compilation of *Friends Journal* articles. Friends may want to check out [www.quit-torture-now.org](http://www.quit-torture-now.org) as well as support efforts such as the School of the Americas Watch in November.
5. The Ad Hoc Electronic Communications Committee wants subscribers to SAYMA's list-serve to know that they are on all three lists if they were on the original list before services were divided up into discussion, announcements and general lists. Visit [sayma.org](http://sayma.org) to find out more.
6. Lastly, the yearly meeting theme for June 6-10 at Warren Wilson College is "Nurtured by Our Roots, Bursting Forth with Fruits". The talent show will be shelved this year, possibly replaced by folk dancing. We have a unique opportunity for greater participation with the current site being so close. I hope Friends begin planning to attend, reserving the dates for time spent with the larger community of Friends in our region.

1:50 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

[Board meets just prior to meeting for worship]

1:55 Minute of Appreciation to George Gjelfriend

**The Religious Education Committee is deeply grateful for all of George Gjelfriend's years of service and devotion to the Meeting's Youth Group. He is appreciated for his great respect for Young Friends, and his valuation of that of God in them and in all. He has taught by his example as well as by his questioning and seeking of truth. He has brought out all the best within the Youth Group. That Truth exists and should be resoundingly affirmed by us.**

**Approved**

2:00 clerk's concern: naming committee—Ellen Frerotte agreed to serve with naming committee.

**Approved**

Other Concerns

Disappearing silverware. List serve ask for silverware donations. Alan and Jim will look to donate some flatware as their (silverware) drawer overfloweth.

Gary Briggs asked if we could set a date for a called meeting for the procedure for marriage under the care of the meeting... to consider the queries offered by the ad hoc committee examining marriage. Clerk reminded Friends that the printed report was available in the foyer, and was posted on the meeting website. SE requested not to use time prior to worship for the called meeting.

Gary asked if we could schedule so that attendance would be maximized. A Friend pointed out that we cannot be sure when the most attendance will happen with the new meeting schedule.

Lynnora Bierce offered a concern that we keep our speech simple, and that “brevity is the soul of wit.”

Kitti R has a copy in her office of the report written about us (Asheville Friends Meeting) by a reporter from UNCA. There are also copies of this in the foyer.

Closing Worship