

Minutes for Second Month 2007
Meeting for worship with attention to business
Second Month 11, 2007, 9:30 AM

Reading: From Philadelphia Yearly Meetings' Faith and Practice:

One thing I understand now is that one's intellect alone won't pull one through, and that the greatest service it can perform is to open a window for that thing we call the divine spirit. If one trusts to it alone, it's like trusting to an artificial system of ventilation—correct in theory but musty in practice. How I wish it were as easy to throw everything open to the spirit of God as it is to fresh air.

Hilda Clark, 1908

Worship

Attendance

Betsy Rose, Kitty Reynolds, Sarah Jane Thomas, Ellen Frerotte, Penelope Wright, Anna MacDermott, Perry Treadwell, Mary Kedl, Judith Greenburg, Pete Sutherland, Phil Neal, David Clements, Katherine Kowal, Bob McGahey, Gary Briggs, Carlyle Stuart, Laura Maynard, Eda Smith, Gerry Smith (Visitors from other monthly meetings underlined).

Clerk—Steve Livingston

Recording Clerk—Lynnora Bierce

Introductions

Everyone attending the meeting introduced themselves, told of which meeting they attend, and if and when they became a member of the Society of Friends.

Review and approval of agenda

Agenda approved

Nominating

Nominating would like to make the following recommendations:

- Bob Smith to Finance Committee
- Ruth Noble to House and Grounds

The following individuals would like to be released from current positions:

- Susan Mitchell from Pastoral Care

We wanted meeting to be aware that we are currently looking for people to serve on the following committees:

- Spiritual Enrichment Committee
- Finance Committee

If you have interest in being involved in any of those committees, please see a member of nominating—Robin Wells, Laura Maynard, Jim Cavener, or Sarah Jane Thomas.

Nominations Approved
Approved release of Susan Mitchell
Friends accepted the report

Discussion:

Recording clerk reminded the meeting that we are looking for both a clerk and a recording clerk to take over duties this fall.

Peace and Earth:

1. We have given our 2006 budget to the finance committee (so you already have a copy, I don't have it with me now)
2. P and E mailed 16 letters urging quick withdrawal from Iraq to our congress people.
3. Further communication with the Cooper Blvd Community support network revealed that they are looking for church groups to sign up to help individual families to help out however that family needs help. Each church (or more than one church) would be matched with a family. Then all the folks working together would try to identify what needs that family had. The Cooper Blvd. folks would also help in whatever ways the churches couldn't. All we would need to do is sign up on their pledge sheet.

Discussion:

A Friend asked if this was the group affected by losing their rental property in Enka district, originally to make way for a Walmart, but now being sold on speculation for another use. It is the same group.

Clerk asked if this concern were not urgent, and it is not.

A Friend expressed appreciation of Peace and Earth putting some light on this project.

A Friend asked if a donation of money was necessary. Peace and Earth said that the group was looking more for resources.

Friends expressed that this is typically the type of help we as Friends should be giving to the community.

Clerk sensed we are ready to identify our meeting as a sponsor for the Cooper Blvd Community Support Network.

In future months we may also decide to contribute money via Peace and Earth outreach.

Action Approved

Report Accepted

Several Friends raised concern over the diminishing funds available for Outreach, especially specific cuts Peace and Earth has made to certain Society of Friends organizations. Peace and Earth regrets the cuts, but hopes that in future years, groups who funding has been cut will be able receive funds when they become available.

Minute of Appreciation to Asheville Friends Meeting:

The Ministry and Nurture Committee of Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting's Association takes this opportunity to express our gratitude to Asheville Friends for the nurture of our bodies and spirits during our time here this weekend.

Our work felt support in the Spirit through kind and gracious hospitality, nourishing and plentiful food and the opportunity to come to know each other in that which is eternal.

We thank you.

Minute was read by Bob McGahey from Ministry and Nurture Committee of SAYMA

Approved with gratitude from monthly meeting clerk.

(Break for Meeting for Worship—10:20 AM)

12:00 PM Settle

Reading: excerpt from Five Wonderful Precepts by Thich Nhat Hahn:

Aware of suffering caused by unmindful speech and the inability to listen to the suffering of others, I vow to cultivate loving speech and deep listening in order to bring joy and happiness to others and relieve others of their suffering. Knowing that words can create happiness or bring suffering, I vow to learn to speak truthfully, with words that can inspire self confidence, joy and hope. I am determined not to spread news that I do not know to be certain, and not to criticize or condemn things I am not sure of. I will refrain from uttering words that can cause division or discord, or that can cause the family or the community to break. I will make every effort to reconcile and resolve all conflicts, even small.

Worship

Attendance:

Phil Neal, Eda Smith, Kristi Gjelfriend, George Gjelfriend, Ellen Frerotte, Rusty Maynard, Katherine Kowal, David Clements, Kitti Reynolds, Sam Rizzo, Bob McGahey, Kieron Mann, Joy Gossett, Ellen Oldham, Jim Cavener, Gerry Smith, Gary Briggs, Barbara Esther, (Visitors from other monthly meetings are underlined).

Clerk—Steve Livingston

Recording Clerk—Lynnora Bierce

Introductions:

Welcome to Bob McGahey from Celo Meeting. Welcome back to Kieron Mann.

Scholarship Committee

The Scholarship Committee is composed of 3 members, one appointed by each of the Ministry and Counsel, Religious Education, and Finance Committees. Current members are Katherine Kowal (clerk, appointed by M&C), Robin Wells (appointed by Religious Education), and David Clements (appointed by Finance).

The Scholarship Committee's main role has been to administer the "Scholarship Fund." Recently Meeting asked the Scholarship Committee to assume supervision of the Fund known as "College-Aged Friends Support Fund" (also known as the "Young Friends Support Fund," and previously known as the "Education Loan Fund" and then the "Education Fund.")

We note that Meeting also has given scholarships to participants in the Quaker Leadership Scholars Program at Guilford College. These Scholarships have been made directly from the General Fund by application directly to Meeting and approval by Meeting on a case-by-case basis. In 2006 there have been no students enrolled in the Quaker Leadership Scholars Program, and Meeting has made no grants. The Scholarship Committee has considered assuming supervision of these scholarships as well. We will not discuss these scholarships further here.

At the Scholarship Committee meeting, we reviewed the history of the two scholarship funds currently under our supervision. We decided not to review in detail previous decisions about the "College-Aged Friends Support Fund," because those previous decisions specified procedures that have in the end not been followed, and because Meeting recently made a grant from that fund that was an exception to the previous procedures. We decided to "start from scratch" in developing policies for the "College-Aged Friends Support Fund." We are not proposing any specific policy now, but are asking for Meeting input about the various possibilities.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE TWO SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS

The “Scholarship Fund,” currently valued at about \$1,000, was established by the Meeting in 2000 or 2001. Previously Meeting had given scholarships directly from the General Fund. The Scholarship Fund is available to help F/friends of any age attend Quaker events such as SAYMA or Friends General Conference. Grants of up to \$300 are approved by the Scholarship Committee. Larger requests are referred to Ministry and Counsel for approval. Grants have generally been small and around \$100 in amount. Periodically Meeting has received donations for the Fund, and has occasionally supplemented the Fund from the General Fund. Meeting adopted procedures for administering this fund several years ago.

The “College-Age Friends Support Fund” was created by a gift of \$5,000 in about 1996. The donor originally wanted the fund to be used for small grants to Quaker students, but has since has given Meeting permission to use the money as it sees fit. This fund currently has a balance of about \$11,000 (which includes \$1500 in separate earmarked gifts). When a procedure for this fund was last developed by Meeting in 2003, Meeting decided to make it available to help young adult Friends, regardless of whether or not they are in college. The Finance Committee was charged with preserving the principal of the Fund and determining the amount available for disbursement each year (the amount was \$500 for 2003 and 2004). Ministry and Counsel Committee was charged with writing each year to all Friends within the age group and inviting them to apply for a grant. No “needs” test was to be applied to these requests. If, for example, 5 young Friends applied the money available for disbursement would simply be divided equally among them. As it has happened, letters were sent out and about 4 grants were made in one year (about 2003). The next year, letters were sent out by Ministry and Counsel, but these were not followed up. No grants were made then or since until 2006. In 2006 Meeting made a grant of \$1050 from the fund to help with college expenses of Stephanie Gossett.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Although the committee has many questions about disbursement of these funds, we did agree on some general principles.

1. Fairness. All members and attenders should have equal access to both the Scholarship Fund and the College-Age Friends Support Fund. This means that there should be some way of advising Friends of their availability.
2. Practicality. We do not wish to burden any individual or committee (least of all ourselves) with the responsibility of making complex assessments of need of the individual or worthiness of the cause to which the funds would be applied. However, we recognize that some needs are more compelling than others.
3. Flexibility in amount of disbursement. This is perhaps the most controversial. We feel that, within the limits of the funds available, there should be no arbitrary limit on the amount disbursed. We expect the Scholarship Fund to be *replenished* from time to time. However, for the College-Aged Friends Support Fund, if we do not limit the grants we will likely be asked for grants that use up the principal and deplete the fund. However, it seems to us better that the money be used than that the funds simply sit unused or that disbursements are so small as to do no real good.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE COLLEGE-AGED FRIENDS SUPPORT FUND, FOR CONSIDERATION BY MEETING

We hope that Friends will be able to spend at least a few minutes giving us their opinions about some or all of the following issues, to help us as we develop a proposal for the College-Aged Friends Support Fund.

1. What should be the name of the Fund? Does the name “College-Aged Friends Support Fund” describe adequately our intentions?
2. Should disbursements (up to a certain dollar amount) be made simply on the basis of request or should there be some discernment process? If the latter, what should that process be and who will make this

assessment?

3. How will we let Friends know of the availability of these funds? Who will take on this responsibility?
4. Should we try to preserve the fund's principal by setting a limit on the amount disbursed each year? Should this be the amount of interest earned? A fixed dollar amount set by Finance committee? If funds are not requested in one year, would that amount "roll over" and become available the following year? If we decide to preserve the principal, do we define the principal as the original amount given in 1996 (\$5,000), the total amount donated to the Fund throughout its existence (\$6,500) or the amount currently in the Fund (about \$11,000)?
5. Who may apply for grants from the Fund? The young Friend (as was specified in the original procedure adopted by Meeting) or his or her parent? Anyone on their behalf?

We thank Meeting in advance for its consideration of this.

Discussion:

A Friend felt that disbursement of funds needed to be clarified, such as how to divide the funds and what the use for the funds should be.

A Friend asked if a member who has a child meeting hasn't met would be allowed to apply for funds?

Some Friends felt that the name of the fund should change to help defray confusion of it sounding too much like the other funds.

Some Friends felt the funds should remain flexible and available to more than college age Friends, i.e. to young Friends not attending college, and to friends who attend college who are not typical college age. Although some Friends felt that the fund should remain "educational", and other Friends felt the age range of 18 to 35 is flexible enough to meet needs.

Some Friends felt strongly that the principal of the fund should be kept, while others felt that all the money could be spent if necessary, especially if the student is pursuing education that is not usually supported by other means, and is particularly important to the Society of Friends (i.e. peace studies).

A Friend said discernment is important, and that a specific process needs to be applied so that moneys can be applied for at a certain time, and received at a certain time.

Two Friends reminded meeting that FASFA funds grants, scholarships and etc, and that those funds are limited in what they may be used for such as only tuition. Many students need a smaller amount of money for books or learning supplies, such a computers, art supplies and etc. These Friends asked for flexibility in application time (after FASFA has been disbursed) disbursement time, and purpose of funds.

A Friend expressed the need for applicants to write a letter to meeting asking for these funds because a connection from the applicant to the meeting needs to exist.

Clerk asked that further comments be made directly to members of the committee.

Friends asked that the next meeting of the committee be published so that interested Friends may attend.

Friends accepted the report

Review and Approval of previous minutes:

10th month 2006—**Approved**

1st month 2007

Discussion:

A Friend expressed concern about things said at last month's meeting that are in the minutes which were critical and perhaps should be omitted.

A Friend reminded us to strive to be tender to one another, yet not to censor or avoid disagreement. Minute items we are not in unity as well as when we are in unity show the ebb and flow of our times. Try not to avoid conflict but also hold each other in tenderness during those times of conflict.

Another Friend noted that names are not recorded with statements in the minutes, and we do not censor each other.

Clerk—we are equal in the eyes of God. Doesn't matter who said it. Are we willing to trust that people speak from

a place of spirit?

A Friend expressed that these critical comments were made of a person who was not in attendance of last month's meeting.

Recording clerk—There should not be an instant in which we speak of a person not in attendance in meeting, and the person who speaks of such should understand that minutes are taken, and not speak of something they wish not to be in the minutes. Is that not why we speak from the spirit?

The Friend who acted as recording clerk for 1st month said that the minutes for the first half were read before the commencement of second half and were approved without objection.

A Friend asked that a specific person be struck from the minutes of last month.

A Friend said we must balance our love for one another with the ability to speak the truth freely. We have an obligation to record the meeting as it happened as well as the obligation to hold each other in loving kindness. Ministry and Counsel will be brought this matter.

Spiritual Enrichment

The Spiritual Enrichment Committee is still active, but our numbers have been cut almost in half with the notice of two committee members withdrawal from the committee. The remaining active members include Carrie Coward, Ellen Frerotte, and Laura Maynard. Betsey Rose Weiss attended the meeting and will participate on the committee to a limited degree based on her availability. Jim Cavener attended our Feb 7 meeting as a member of Nominating. Prior to the meeting, Carrie Coward sent an email to the Asheville Friends list seeking additional participation on the committee. This note did not prompt additional community members to attend (Betsey had been personally invited). Participation on this committee is critical to the success of the change of meeting structure, so there is some concern, but the current committee will be giving this thought and there is not major concern at this time.

SEC continues to focus, for now, on the Adult Spiritual Enrichment activities from 9:30-10:15 each first day. We don't plan to change the sequence of these sessions until we get further feedback from the ad hoc committee that is looking at the change in meeting structure. Thus far, feedback and attendance have been good. The change seems to be especially well received by the adult members of the community.

Steve Coward has agreed to (for now) facilitate the 3rd Sunday session that was previously facilitated by Satchel. The nature of these sessions will be along the lines of "meditation and study with the mystics." He will be sharing readings and facilitating practices as described my past and modern day mystics and spiritual teachers (so Rex Ambler would be included, but so might Yogananda or Eckhardt Tolle, and others for example).

SEC will begin to send email notes mid week each week to remind the community of the Adult RE that will be held.

There have been some suggestions from community members about potential retreat topics and facilitators for a 2007 retreat. At this time, SEC does not feel we have the leading or the manpower to plan a retreat. There was mention that an ad hoc committee had been initiated by David Clements, but when Carrie checked with David, he indicated that no ad hoc committee exists. Thus, it is fair to say that there will not be a retreat in 2007 unless there are individuals that feel led to plan and organize this. If someone does feel led, please mention this at MFB or see Carrie Coward.

Lastly, there has been a request to have a "forum type" discussion on what it means to hold people in the light. SEC agrees this would be a good topic for discussion and plans to have this occur during a Sunday Adult RE session. Details will be forthcoming.

Discussion:

A Friend clarified that the Ad Hoc Nuts & Bolts committee does not supply feedback, but instead acts as a clearing house for feedback.

A Friend reminded meeting that this was a 6 month experiment, will we be willing to go beyond the 6 month time limit?

A Friend said that a survey would go out this month to see what Friends think of the change.

A Friend asked if there was interest in a simple retreat, and clerk reminded that next month is the deadline to give Common Light a deposit for the retreat (as we had last year).

A Friend suggested we hold the retreat here in the meetinghouse. Another Friend reminded that any event held in the meetinghouse must go through Gary Briggs.

Friends Accepted the Report

1:15 pm Finance Committee Report:

Report of the AFM Finance Committee to Asheville Friends Meeting, Draft #1, February 11, 2007, from David Clements, Acting Clerk

1. We welcomed Bob Smith to our last meeting. The Nominating Committee plans to nominate him to join the Finance Committee.
2. Since George Gjelfriend has become the Treasurer, Meeting currently has no Assistant Treasurer. We are recommending to the Nominating Committee and to Meeting that David Clements be nominated and appointed as Assistant Treasurer.
3. We recommend to the Board of the "Asheville Friends Meeting Corporation" and to Meeting that Palin Spruance, who previously was a member of the Board *ex officio* as Treasurer, be elected by the Board as a regular member. Per the Bylaws of the Corporation, Palin will have to be elected by the Board and subsequently approved by Meeting. The present Board resolution regarding bank accounts requires all account signers to be members of the Board. The Finance Committee would like Palin, whose primary role is Bookkeeper, to remain also as a signer of our accounts. The Board will be meeting on February 18, during the Finance Committee Meeting, 9 to 10:15 am.
4. The Finance Committee and Palin, our Bookkeeper, have negotiated an increase in his monthly fee. Before Palin became the Bookkeeper, we were paying \$10 per hour for bookkeeping. Our arrangement with Palin is that he works as a professional Certified Public Accountant, not an employee. Since he is a professional, the law permits us to pay him less than the minimum wage (which as of 1/1/07 is \$6.15 per hour in North Carolina). In 2006 we paid him a fee of \$100 per month (reflecting the 2006 budget of \$1200 per year). He spent at least 20 hours per month on bookkeeping, more time than he had anticipated. Beginning in January, during which month he spent about 40 hours on Meeting work, the Finance Committee has approved paying him \$150 per month. We recommend that Meeting raise the amount budgeted in 2007 for bookkeeping to \$1800, and that Meeting plan to retain Palin as Bookkeeper for a fee of \$150 per month as long as he is willing. Although we have not sought another quote for bookkeeping services, we think that the current \$150 fee is very fair to Meeting. Another option would be to seek a volunteer bookkeeper, as we had before 2003. Ultimately, the time required for bookkeeping will be less than what Palin has spent lately.
5. We are presenting for comments a draft budget for 2007 for comment and discussion. Committees are asked to review the amounts budgeted and reduce any lines that they can. We anticipate that Meeting will be able to approve a final 2007 budget in March or April. We remind Friends that Meeting previously agreed to use the 2006 numbers for 2007 (except for SAYMA dues and Outreach) until the final 2007 budget is adopted. We point out major changes in the draft budget compared with 2006:
 - (a) Increase in House and Grounds from \$5,000 to \$7,000
 - (b) Increase in Bookkeeping Fees from \$1200 to \$1800
 - (c) Addition of Directors and Officers insurance (\$160)
 - (d) Decrease in Outreach budget from \$1100 to \$100 (with hope for more if a surplus develops, as it did in 2006)

6. We are revising the policy proposed by the Finance Committee last year and adopted by Meeting, whereby each line item has clear supervision by a committee. We have a rough draft, not yet completely discussed or approved by the Finance Committee, which friends may receive by writing to David at Asheville Friends Meeting finance at gmail.com.

Discussion:

Ministry and Counsel has a \$200 budgeted but \$300 was requested.

SEC, Library, RE and other committees had not requested a specific budget, so the budget for these are last year's numbers.

It was asked that this budget be placed on the website.

Other concerns:

Unisex Bathrooms? A sign is needed to communicate that the bathrooms are now both unisex.

Consensus is to make sure information is displayed on the door for visitors and newcomers.

Rereading of opening reading for second part of meeting.

Welcome back to Lynnora.

closing worship