

Seventh Month 2007 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

12:00 Settle

reading

The Quaker process is an inherently inactive one; Unity evolves from the speaking of individual's perceptions of Truth and the Inner Light; these ministries must be heard; we must open ourselves to them, and be willing to re-examine our own leanings as we listen. An evolution occurs as we corporately examine each offering on a subject, and separate that which is personal preference and prejudice from that which is God's Word. As we do so, we develop a deeper and clearer understanding of Divine leading. Those who are absent cannot participate in this process. One who is absent is not merely unable to *speak*, but likewise unable to *hear* and ultimately unable to *evolve with the Meeting*.

I think it is very valid and important to consider the views known to us from absent members; we must consider their feelings; and we must ask ourselves if their condition speaks to us. But, ultimately, having considered them as individuals, we must trust that the Inner Light, present in us and in our meeting, will lead us. We can, after all, speak only what is in our hearts.

excerpted from Absent Friends and the Quaker Process

by Phil Oliver, Pacific Yearly Meeting

San Francisco Meeting, *Friends Bulletin*, March, 1995

worship

attendance:

Kitti Reynolds, Philip Neal, Katherine Kowal, David Clements, Adrienne Weir, Ellen Frerotte, Joy Gossett, George Gjelfriend, Kristi Gjelfriend, Sarah Jane Thomas, Alan Robinson, Jim Cavener

Steve Livingston—Clerk

Lynnora Bierce—Recording Clerk

introductions

review and approval of agenda

—Approved

Review and Approval of previous minutes:

5th month 2007

—Approved

6th month 2007

—Approved

House and Grounds (George Gjelfriend)

Acting according to the meeting's prior approval for \$500, House & Grounds hired Bob Payne to do some electrical work for us [installing the second fan in the meeting room]. When he opened the ceiling in the Meeting Room, he discovered a rat's nest of wiring which would never have passed code. He spent the better part of two days putting things to rights; and because of major changes in the inspection division; he is still waiting for them to set a date for inspection. House and Grounds requests that MFB retroactively approve up to an additional \$500 to complete the job.

David Clements as acting clerk of Finance Committee suggested that H&G could spend up to their budget amount without seeking approval of each expenditure within the scope of their budget.

Friends appreciate H&G keeping Meeting apprised of these expenditures, but also felt that monthly reports of this spending was just as well received and that H&G committee was entrusted to do what is best for the meeting house and grounds in regards to their budget (which for this year is \$5000.)

Friends expressed their hearty appreciation for the improvement in the appearance of the exterior of the Meetinghouse since it has been painted by attender Scott Evans' company, Asheville Remodeling.

Friends approved allowing House and Grounds to spend the remainder of their budgeted funds for 2007 without prior review by the Meeting.

Scholarship Committee (Katherine Kowal)

The scholarship committee met on March 25, 2007 to develop policy and procedure for administering the College Age Friends Support Fund as requested by Meeting for Business. David Clements, Katherine Kowal, and Robin Wells were present.

At our previous meeting we set up some general guiding principles for oversight of the funds. These included: a) Fairness. We feel all friends should be advised of the availability of the funds. b) Flexibility. We do not wish to "tie our hands" with complicated rules or procedures; and c) Convenience. We do not wish to burden anyone (least of all ourselves with making complicated judgments of merit or need.

The following policies were recommended and will be brought to Meeting for Business for approval.

Name of Fund. The fund will continue to be called the College-age Friends Support Fund.

Purpose of Fund. The fund exists to support college-age friends with their educational goals. Both "college-age" friends and "educational goals" should be broadly construed and flexibly interpreted. It might include those who delay entering college or who choose to pursue vocational training. Examples of requests that would meet the criteria include (but certainly are not limited to) the following: child care so that a parent can attend classes, books, tools, or art supplies, transportation, educational conferences or workshops.

Who is Eligible to Apply. The fund is intended for Friends who are currently involved with AFM or were prior to have been substantially and recently involved in Asheville Friends Meeting [activities, including SAYF].

Application Procedure. The scholarship committee will notify all members of the Meeting community of the availability of the funds in May of each year. This will take the form of a notice on our web site and e-mails to graduating high school students. Interested college-age friends may apply by filling out a simple application form. (See sample attached.) The application should be made by the person requesting the funds.

Disbursement of Funds. The scholarship committee will review requests to determine if they meet the eligibility requirements. The committee will be authorized to grant requests of up to \$250 per individual and \$500 per calendar year. Requests for larger amounts (or requests received after the first \$500 has been awarded) will be forwarded to Meeting for Business for consideration.

In response to a question about process, Katherine said the committee would meet in a timely fashion, perhaps within a month upon receiving an application.

Friends united with the Clerk's suggestion changing the eligibility requirements to state that the fund is intended for any Friend who is currently attending college and was substantially involved in the Meeting prior to attending college, whether as a member, a regular attender, a SAYFer or a Young Adult Friend.

A Friend suggested that \$500 is too small an amount. Friends were not in unity on depleting the fund, or maintaining the fund. Katherine pointed out that amounts larger than \$500 could be offered, but the meeting would have to approve rather than just the committee.

A Friend stated that he would prefer if those with an Associate Membership or Membership were given priority over other applicants for scholarship money, because of what he referred to as “Integrity of identity”: if a family attaches importance to joining the meeting and making their children associate members they should receive the benefit of having the spiritual community help their children. This is a way that we show commitment to the Society of Friends.

A Friend stated that it is unfair to give Membership or Associate Membership priority since meeting is unsure what Associate membership is, and therefore it is an unfair burden to give this discernment to the committee, and unfair also to the Friends who are actively involved in the meeting and have not become members, or have parents who signed them up as associate members.

Another Friend say the requirement muddles things in the case of only one applicant who happens not to be an associate member. What is a “meaningful connection”? Do we want to burden the committee with that definition?

The Recording Clerk stepped away from the clerk’s table to express that she was opposed in principle to recording her children as associate members because it takes away from them the right to make their own decision about involvement in the Society of Friends. She pointed out that her daughter was active in the Meeting prior to going to college, and continued to think of herself as a Quaker and to practice Quaker values even though she has not yet made a decision to join. Should she be penalized because her mother chose to allow her to make her own decision regarding membership?

The Friend offered to set aside his request, but asked that the Meeting renew its efforts to examine the meaning of membership, and revisit the guidelines once the matter was settled.

Friends approved the guidelines as amended.

Friends accepted the report.

Ministry and Counsel

Action Item: Our meeting has been invited to participate in a half day interfaith dialogue in early Eleventh Month 2007. Ministry and Counsel Committee wants to support this dialogue and asks that two or three Friends attend with Steve Livingston.

In response to inquiries, Steve explained that the dialog is being hosted by Congregation Beth Hah Tephila, that they were not soliciting any funds, and we do not know the topics as of this date. Steve said that he felt that it spoke to his condition to have these interfaith discussions, and leapt at the opportunity, as did M&C.

Friends approved sponsoring the dialog.

Clerks and/or representatives from all meeting committees are invited to join a clerk’s support meeting on 8-25-07. The purpose of this first of four proposed quarterly meetings is to consider how Spirit moves in each committee’s work and to envision our future. It will take place in a worship-sharing mode concluding with a shared meal consisting of dishes that each has enjoyed during the past year. We hope subsequent quarterly meetings will include topics of budget and money concerns in Tenth Month, to support the work of the Finance Committee; discussion looking toward our 2008 state of the meeting report to the yearly meeting in First Month; and an envisioning retreat in the spring to support the efforts of the Nominating Committee.

Friends accepted the report.

Memorial Minute for Mimi Hearne

At last month's meeting for business, Friends approved a memorial minute for Miriam "Mimi" Hearne written by Barbara Esther, and allowed that Barbara could make changes and additions to the minute to include more of Mimi's family information, and that the revised minute could be entered into the record of the meeting and submitted to Friends Journal for publication without further review. In consultation with the Memorial Committee, Mimi's children made such changes, adding details about Mimi's family as well as life experiences that extended the minute by about 50%, while leaving the core of the minute written by Barbara essentially unchanged.

Are Friends willing to allow this revised minute to go forward without further review?

If not, are Friends willing to review the minute now for approval?

Friends approved sending this minute as written and read in the memorial meeting to Friends Journal.

Update on clearness committee for Raelin Hansen

Last month, in response to a request by Raelin Hansen, a clearness committee for membership was formed, consisting of Phil Neal, Ellen Frerotte, and Peter Buck, with Joyce Rawlings-Davies to be asked to join if possible.

Have members of the committee been in contact with one another and the applicant to arrange a meeting?

Is there anything else the meeting can do to support or facilitate the committee?

Ellen Frerotte reported that the committee has not been convened. Peter Buck had offered and was approved as convener. Ellen said she would contact Peter. Clerk was thanked for keeping track.

Spiritual Enrichment

The clerk has received a report from the most recent meeting of the committee. Does the committee wish to present a report to the meeting for business?

Ellen Frerotte gave a synopsis: SE Committee is putting together Adult RE program for the Fall. Possible offerings include Quaker queries; meditation practices; multigenerational activities; Peace and Earth related outreach, projects, and other work; Quakerism 101; Quaker Book Club; Spiritual Journeys; and, singing.

On the issue of Singing in between RE and MFW: We agreed that the threshing session on this issue was valuable. Even before the meeting, things seemed better and the transition was smoother than it had been. We agreed to continue with singing at 10:15 and to be very respectful of timing - ending RE on time for example. All agreed that it is important to invite the children in and engage them in the singing and in the beginning of MFW. We can re-address if needed in the spring.

Friend remarked that singing is very important especially for young Friends. Adult First hour activities have a hard time cutting off to start the singing on time. No solution suggested, but recognizes the problem.

Ellen reported that the committee will try to get more children's songs incorporated into the singing.

Friends accepted the report of Spiritual Enrichment.

Nominating

Report for July Business Meeting

Nominating Committee

Nominating would like to make the following recommendations:

- Steve Livingston would like to continue as a regular member of Ministry and Council, after his term as an ex officio member is up this coming month
- Steve Livingston to the House and Grounds Committee

Other business:

- Nominating needs for the Naming Committee to find one or two more members for our committee, as Laura Maynard's term is up this summer.
- Nominating Committee is currently seeking people to fill the positions of treasurer, clerk, and recording clerk. If you find you have leadings to fill any of these positions, please let one of the members of nominating know.

Friends approved nomination of Steve Livingston to serve a two-year term on House and Grounds commencing 7/2007 and ending 6/2009.

Friends approved nomination of Steve Livingston to serve a two-year term on Ministry and Counsel commencing 9/2007 and ending 8/2009.

Friends accepted the report of Nominating Committee.

Friend reminded that we could use a couple members for Pastoral Care Committee, which is currently without a clerk. We would like to have a member from M&C. George Gjelfriend expressed that he and Kristi Gjelfriend would like to serve on Pastoral Care and they also happen to be serving on M&C.

Friends approved George and Kristi Gjelfriend to serve on Pastoral Care Committee.

George offered to convene the committee.

Steve will continue in his position as clerk of meeting through August 2007. Lynnora's term will also end in August 2007. But she is willing to stay on until a new recording clerk is named... but that a new recording clerk should still be searched for.

A Friend expressed that we should at least know who our clerk and recording clerk would be in September. M&C will meet this coming Tuesday and discuss the plan to find a new clerk or a contingency plan to have guest clerks in rotation as week did in 2004/05.

A Friend asked if there was no contingency in place to have a Treasurer. David Clements speaking for the Finance Committee said that although we really need a Treasurer, it is not a crisis, although we would function better with a treasurer thereby taking some of the burden off of our bookkeeper especially in making decisions beyond his position.

A Friend asked if our tax-exempt status would be affected by not having that position filled. The clerk explained that legally it is the Board of Directors that must have a treasurer, not the Meeting. The board's next meeting is in October, and at that time it would be a burden not to have that position filled in regards to our non-profit status.

other business

Constitution of Naming Committee: Alan Robinson, Steve Livingston, and Lynnora Bierce agreed to resume their service if Meeting approved.

Friends approved Alan Robinson, Steve Livingston, and Lynnora Bierce to serve as ad hoc Naming Committee.

personal concerns

Phil Neal spoke regarding clerking. We have a meeting here where everyone thinks is wonderful to attend on Sunday. We have a spirit about us, but when we look for officers, everyone runs for the hills. Have an open session where "officers" discuss their positions problems and solutions to the community.

Ellen Frerotte read a "Where are the ferns" note from a neighbor. Kitti will ask Scott to see if they were removed for painting, and if not discern if they were nicked.

David Clements asked if there were plans for doing a State of the meeting report for this year. Clerk reported that, M&C did discuss this in their last meeting and recommended foregoing 2007 and starting in all earnestness to proceed with the 2008 State of the Meeting report.

Friends approved foregoing a 2007 State of the Meeting Report.

Lynnora Bierce asked Friends to please hold her daughter Geneva in the light as she is fighting an infection.

closing worship

1:45 PM