

Tenth Month Minutes
Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
October 14, 2007

We began with a period of worship.

Attendance

Steve Houseworth, Kitti Reynolds, Adrienne Weir, George Gjelfriend, Phil Neal, Julie Moser, Jen Rhode, Bobby Carter, Raelin Hansen, Steve Livingston, Alan Robinson, Evan Richardson, David Clements, Sarah Jane Thomas, Gary Briggs, Jim Cavener, Rusty Maynard, Kristi Gjelfriend.

Barbara Esther—Clerk
Lynnora Bierce—Recording Clerk

Reading:

“Much of our concern with holiness and righteousness seems to be fundamentally a concern with controlling an uncontrollable God. By setting aside certain space as holy, by means of human action, we try to control what sort of encounters we can have with God in other spaces. The burning bush reminds us that God chooses when and where we will have a divine encounter, and that the Divine Presence makes that spot and time holy, not anything we do or say.”

From *Encounter with the Taproot* by Lloyd Lee Wilson

The agenda was accepted as presented

Friends approved of Ninth Month minutes.

Treasurer’s Report (Adrienne Weir)

A PDF version of the report is available for viewing on the meeting website. Adrienne informed us that we are 75% through the year but that only 69% of our budget has been reached.

Note: Friends who reviewed a report posted before today should know that it is different from the one presented in our meeting today. Errors were corrected.

The Treasurer’s report was accepted with thanks.

Board Report (David Clements)

The annual meeting of the Board of Directors of Asheville Friends Meeting met on October 14, 2007 and convened at 9:50 AM.

Attendance and Quorum:

Adrienne Weir (ex officio, Treasurer)

Valerie Collins (Secretary)

David Clements (ex officio, Asst. Treasurer)

Barbara Esther (ex officio, Clerk of Meeting)

Also in attendance: Palin Spruance

Signatories:

The Board of Directors discussed signatories for the checking and other accounts for the Meeting. The Board of Directors approved that those holding the offices of Clerk, Treasurer, and Asst. Treasurer be signers on the accounts.

Election of Directors and Officers:

The Board of Directors discussed officers for the upcoming year and elected a fifth director. The Board of Directors approved the following Director and Officers:

David Clements: Ex officio (Asst. Treasurer) and Chair
Valerie Collins: Secretary
Barbara Esther: Ex officio (Clerk of Meeting)
Adrienne Weir: Ex officio (Treasurer)
Palin Spruance: (pending approval by Meeting for Business)

The Board of Directors notes that the final financial reports for 2004, 2005, and 2006 are unavailable for review.

Some concern was raised regarding Palin Spruance, or any Friend, serving on the Board while not regularly attending meeting or meeting for business. A Friend asked that those in meeting who have more contact with Palin speak about his involvement. Members of the finance committee spoke positively of Palin's involvement in that committee and of his knowledge of the meeting's funds. Another member of the Finance Committee said that he might suggest that Nominating Committee look into the matter of peopling the board. A Friend stated that although we welcome Palin's involvement in the meeting on the level he is now contributing, he feels some concern that Palin may be missing out on other gifts that meeting has to offer. Another Friend said that she would rather welcome someone who is willing to serve the meeting, and hopes that service on the Board will bring him closer to the meeting.

It was stated that checks of \$499 or less require one of the above to sign, checks for \$500 or more require two of the above to sign. The bookkeeper draws the checks, and signatories sign, whereas the bookkeeper does not sign checks as a matter of policy.

Only the bookkeeper will write checks and will have custody of the checkbook, for specific security reasons.

A member of the Finance Committee asked that the matter of handling the checkbook and signers be sent back to Finance to write policy.

Friends approved that Palin Spruance serve on the Board of Directors

Friends approved that the bookkeeper not sign checks as a matter of policy.

Friends approved setting aside the year-end reports of the last three years.

A Friend asked for an explanation of the purpose of the report. We were told it was for internal reasons, and is used mostly by the Finance Committee. Another Friend asked whether the meeting could hire someone to formulate year-end reports so that the burden is less on the committee. A member of the committee said that paying someone to do this is reasonable, but that it is not a high priority in her opinion. A Friend spoke from experience of having a failed

business, noting that changing systems is very difficult, so it seems wise to him to move on from where we are now, and rather than burden anyone in meeting with this odious task of dubious value. He recommends we set aside reports of previous years.

A member of the committee said that one part of the problem is that although we know some totals, we do not have totals for individual funds. The Finance Committee was advised to take care of itself and not to become overburdened. A request was made of Friends who feel they can help the Finance Committee to contact them directly. The clerk thanked the Friend who brought to our attention the idea of setting aside the past and looking to the present.

The report of the Finance Committee was accepted.

Phil Neal, Steve Livingston, and Adrienne Weir (ALT) were appointed to serve on an ad hoc Welcoming Committee to plan to welcome new members on October 28, 2007.

Marriage Procedure, Part I: Introduction (Evan Richardson)

(Available in hard copy in the foyer, and electronic copy on the website)

The clerk reminded Friends that this is just the first part of our consideration of the Marriage Procedure, and that other parts will be brought forward in coming months. Three areas are held for subsequent months: the overview of the marriage process, the queries for clearness and the duties of the clearness committee and the meeting.

A Friend noted that “straight” was left out of the list of sexual orientations welcomed as couples seeking clearness. We replaced the list with: “Regardless of sexual orientation or gender presentation. . .”

A Friend urged us not to let ourselves to be stuck without resolution regarding the introduction. Another Friend said that nothing in Quakerism is written in stone, and changes can be made in the future, that we should take a chance, and recognize that this introduction was written in a spirit-led manner.

Friends approved the introduction to Asheville Friends Meeting’s Marriage Procedure document with one change noted earlier.

Membership (Jim Cavener)

Recommendation for membership by Julie Moser’s
Clearness Committee:

On a pleasant fall afternoon (9/29/2007) Julie Moser and her clearness committee met to consider her membership in the Asheville Friends Meeting. Jim Cavener, Katherine Kowal, Laura Maynard, and Peter Buck enjoyed with her a wide-ranging conversation that included meditations on the not-always-apparent differences between being a dedicated attendee and an official member of this meeting.

Ms. Moser evidenced an awareness of simultaneously joining our particular meeting and of joining with the larger currents of Quakerism over the last 350 years. In the spirit of mutual enjoyment, valuing of Quaker process, and exploration of how the Spirit is speaking to all of us, we recognized Julie as one of us – and do recommend that she be received by the Asheville Friends Meeting as a member.

For the Clearness Committee, Peter Buck

Friends happily approved Julie Moser as a member of the Religious Society of Friends, welcoming her to our monthly meeting.

Marriage Request (George Gjelfriend)

A committee on clearness for marriage consisting of Virginia Redfield, Jim Cavener, Gary Briggs, and Kristi & George Gjelfriend met on Saturday, September 29 for the benefit of Lynnora Bierce and Steve Livingston. We were impressed by their clearness, not only vis-à-vis each other but also on marriage within the Religious Society of Friends. Accordingly, we heartily recommend that Asheville Friends approve of their marriage under the care of the meeting.

Lynnora and Steve were mindful of the disparity in the way North Carolina treats heterosexual and homosexual unions. So they went to the State of Massachusetts, where no such dichotomy exists, and were married in the eyes of the law. They are not asking for any privilege arising out of their sexual orientation and are not requesting that their marriage under the care of the meeting be registered with the State of North Carolina.

Steve and Lynnora are both recorded members of Asheville Friends Meeting.

A Friend mentioned that we would have to work out the Marriage Procedure first, that it is the one thing that stands in the way. The clerk reminded us that we will be looking at membership and legality later this year, neither of which is an issue for this marriage.

A Friend reminded us that until we finish our work on the marriage procedure there will be no marriages under the care of the meeting. However, as we are in the process of getting this accomplished, there is no reason that we cannot reverse the minute to not take marriages under our care. This should not be an immovable stone. A Friend said that we might make an exception for this marriage under the care of the meeting if the procedure isn't in place by the appointed time of their wedding. A Friend said that she was comfortable approving this marriage, asking that we not get caught up in the letter of the law, but be led by Spirit. We were reminded us that we don't marry anyone, we are just witnesses.

Naming Committee (Steve Livingston)

Friends approved Jen Rhode to serve on the Nominating Committee for a term of 2 years, until June 2009.

Communications Committee Report (Steve Livingston)

- We have an offer from a Meeting member to make free use of their AOL service to connect our Meeting computer to the Internet, but we are investigating the possibility of free service from MAIN before making a decision. We are still having problems with donated monitors but hope to have that resolved quickly. We will be setting up gmail accounts for the Meeting to facilitate transfer of important data to the Meeting computer. To encourage use of the Meeting's computer, we will post simple instructions near the computer keyboard. If multiple pages are needed, they will be tabbed in clear, American English.
- We will be conducting a survey of all subscribers to help us develop guidelines for

content and frequency of messages. We will continue posting news items on the webpage in lieu of a Meeting newsletter or e-letter, and informing Friends of updates to the website on a weekly basis.

- **Committee Structure:** We invite participation by other Friends in the work entrusted to our committee, and we are open to new members on the committee if any Friends are so led. Our next meeting will be on 11/6 at 7 p.m.
- **Committee's charge:** We defined our committee's purpose as follows: The Communications Committee's role is to facilitate communications and dissemination of information within, to, and from the Meeting. To this end, Communications Committee maintains the Meeting website, electronic mail lists, meeting bulletin boards and calendars (other than meetinghouse use), and the Directory of active members and attenders. Additionally, Communications Committee monitors and channels meeting-related email messages, announcements, and news items.
- **Meeting Directory:** We agreed to take the Directory of active members and attenders under our care. We recommend that the Directory be published annually, in the sixth month of the year. We recommend listing in the front of the directory the names, phone numbers, and email addresses of the clerk, recording clerk, and treasurer, and the names and primary contacts of nearby meetings. We will publish an update in twelfth month. We intend to request an allocation of \$125 annually for the Meeting Directory. (10/10/07)
Present at the meeting were Kieron Mann, Gary Briggs, Steve Livingston (clerk)

Friends accepted the report with gratitude.

(An update of the directory will commence in December)

Personal Concerns

Lynnora Bierce (recording clerk) will not be able to attend eleventh month meeting for worship with attention to business. Julie Moser volunteered to record for the November Meeting.

Marcia Laird wants to remind us that Jim's Birthday is November 3rd so that we can share in the celebration.

We concluded with a period of worship