

MINUTES FOR TWELFTH MONTH OF WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS

Asheville Friends Meeting

December 9, 2007

Attendance (22)

Peter Buck, Kitti Reynolds, David Clements, Susan Mitchell, Jen Rhode, Gary Briggs, Evan Richardson, Ellen Frerotte, Alan Robinson, Jim Cavener, Katherine Kowal, Philip Neal, Joy Gossett, Kristi Gjelfriend, George Gjelfriend, Ellen Oldham, Bobby Carter, Raelin Hansen, Pete Sutherland, Rusty Maynard

Clerk: Barbara Esther
Recording Clerk: Julie Moser

12:10 p.m. We began with a period of worship.

Reading:

May all I say and all I think
 be in harmony with thee,
God within me, God beyond me,
 maker of trees.

In me be the windswept truth of shorepine,
 fragrance of balsam and spruce,
 the grace of hemlock.
In me the truth of douglas fir, straight, tall,
 strong-trunked land hero of fireproof bark.
Sheltering tree of life, cedar's truth be mine,
 cypress truth, juniper aroma, strength of yew.

May all I say and all I think
 be in harmony with thee,
God within me, God beyond me,
 maker of trees.

In me be the truth of streamlover willow
 soil-giving alder
 hazel of sweet nuts, wisdom-branching oak
In me the joy of crabapple, greatmaple, vinemaple
 cleansing cascara and lovely dogwood.
And the gracious truth of the copper branched arbutus,
 bright with colour and fragrance,
 be with me on the Earth.

May all I say and all I think
 be in harmony with thee,
God within me, God beyond me,
 maker of trees.

Chinook Psalter from *Earth Prayers*
Edited by Elizabeth Roberts

The Meeting reviewed and approved the Minutes for the Eleventh Month Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business.

The clerk announced that Meeting Minutes from the Tenth Month's Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business will be forthcoming.

Treasurer's Report

David Clements presented a brief overview of the Treasurer's Report on behalf of Adrienne Weir. David has worked with Quickbooks, software used for accounting, and he said a few aspects of the software remain for clarification.

The 2007 budget is reportedly lagging in its revenue line at approximately the same extent that spending is lagging: contribution income is approximately \$8,500 less than what was budgeted and expenditures are approximately \$8,000 lower than what was budgeted.

One Friend expressed concern about the House & Grounds budget line item and a possible discrepancy, and the House & Grounds Committee will work with the Finance Committee to get clarity on that specific budget.

Nominating Committee Report

Jim Cavener provided an update from the Nomination Committee and expressed his delight with the turnout for the Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business. He also reported that since rise of meeting last week, the full Nominating Committee has met twice to gain clarity on tasks. got clear on tasks and who we were going to ask. NC

The Nominating Committee brought a request to the Meeting to approve two new co-recording clerks for the Asheville Friends Meeting: Julie Moser as primary recording clerk and Jen Rhode as backup co-recording clerk. The Nominating Committee expressed great appreciation to Lynnora Bierce for her extended term and willingness to stay on as recording clerk until Nominating Committee could find successors. The Meeting appreciates her long period of service.

The meeting reviewed and approved a nomination from the Nominating Committee for Julie Moser and Jen Rhode to serve as co-recording clerks until June 2009 for the Asheville Friends Meeting.

The Nominating Committee also happily reported that its first choice for representative of the Asheville Friends Meeting to SAYMA, Peter Buck, has been accepted.

The meeting reviewed and approved a nomination of Peter Buck to serve as the Asheville Friends Meeting representative to SAYMA until June 2009.

Nominating Committee is still working on its role in re-forming a Hospitality Committee. While it has come up with a long slate of names, several individuals have declined for various

reasons. Bob Smith and Phil Neal indicated that they would help. The tasks of the committee might include tea, cookies and other hospitality gestures for various meetings, could oversee Orphan's Thanksgiving and Holiday Celebration. Nothing is in stone, and the Hospitality Committee could work to define its own roles. The Nominating Committee hopes to have more names to bring forward next month.

The meeting reviewed and approved Bob Smith and Phil Neal as members of the Hospitality Committee until June 2009, as proposed by the Nominating Committee.

The Nominating Committee proposed Jen Rhode as a new member of the Peace and Earth Committee.

The meeting approved Jen Rhode as a new member of the Peace and Earth Committee until June 2009 as proposed by the Nominating Committee.

It was reported that due to Palin Spruance's resignation in January 2008, the Meeting will soon be without a bookkeeper. There was a question about whether it is Nominating Committee's responsibility or Finance Committee's to secure a new bookkeeper. There is not a current proposal, but the Nominating Committee welcomes volunteers or possibly arrange for shared bookkeeping duties among members of the Finance Committee. Anyone who would like more information may contact David Clements.

Steve Livingston was thanked for his work on the Meeting's web site, which was described as a valuable resource to help members learn more about committees and members.

A Friend asked the Nominating Committee if it felt as it had enough people to do conduct the work of the committee, and the two members present – Jim Cavener and Jen Rhode – agreed that they did have enough members, though more are always welcome.

After a request from a Friend to ensure that committee members were informed of terms of service, the Meeting agreed to include in the Meeting Minutes the month and year that service would conclude.

Finance Committee Report

David Clements presented a draft copy of the 2008 budget for review (see below), and Friends were encouraged to review it carefully and communicate concerns to Finance Committee in a timely fashion.

In response to one Friend's question about how the "Miscellaneous" budget line item is approved, it was stated that every budget line is supervised by a committee and that any expenditures from "Miscellaneous" line item are brought to the Meeting for review and must be approved by the Meeting before it is spent.

One Friend asked for clarity about the budget as it relates to the history of actual expenditures, noting that some years the actual amount spent equaled round numbers (e.g.,

\$5,000). In the example provided, the Finance Committee explained that while a committee may not spend the entire amount budgeted, the remaining unencumbered dollars are often transferred to reserves, creating a “round” number.

A Friend expressed concerns with the manner in which the outreach budget was constructed, and felt that viewing the budget line item as “just a matter of what is left over” at the end of the year is troubling. This Friend invited the Meeting to rethink and pray about whether the Meeting should make the same commitment to outreach that its does to the newsletter or books for the library. By crafting the outreach budget in the current method, the Friend felt that it made a statement about the Meeting’s values and priorities, and requested Friends to consider this perspective during budget building.

Another Friend expressed that as a community the Meeting has not been committed as fundraisers, and that it is important to be aware that if the Meeting sets a firm outreach budget at the beginning of each year that the community will need to make a commitment to fundraise.

It was explained that the current method of budgeting reflects a process that looks at the trends and data for a more realistic operating budget.

Some discussion was had about whether the Meeting should set an outreach budget and spend it in January to place a higher priority on that line item. It was echoed that doing this may still place the Meeting in the role of fundraiser to meet any gaps at the end of the year.

A Friend asked for clarity on what outreach means, and a member of the Peace & Earth Committee described two different types of outreach activities. The first are activities considered “Quaker” and are engaged in yearly, such as AFS and other direct support to Quakerism. The second was described as general outreach, activities that Peace & Earth has been responsible for – for example, peace marches and environmental organizations.

Friends agreed that individual responses regarding outreach about the proposed 2008 Asheville Friends Meeting Budget will be forwarded to the finance committee. Ministry and Counsel and Peace and Earth Committees will also forward their responses regarding outreach to the Finance Committee.

	Jan - Dec 05 Actual	Jan - Dec 06 Actual	Jan - Dec 07 Actual	2007 Budget	2008 Budget
Income					
Total 4000 · Contribution Income	23729.79	23930.57	15505.67	28786	24200
7020 · Dividends	74.93	0	0		
Total Fund Transfer Income	150	0	0		
7010 · Interest Income	412.99	775.53	1226.3		1000
4150 · Miscellaneous Income	53	0	0		
Rental Income	3182	3783.25	3649.25		3500
7023 · Unrealized gain/loss	0	523.27	0		
Yard Sale	937.75	677	0		
Total Income	28540.46	29689.62	20380.75	28786	28700
Gross Profit	28540.46	29689.62	20380.75	28786	28700

Expense

Fund Transfer Expense	0	50.31	0		
Meeting House					
House and Grounds					
transfer to reserves	0	938.36	4150		
Supplies	0	251.57	141.07		
Cleaning	1392.1	845	784.47		
Equipment	480.72	50.78	32.01		
Landscaping	50.37	0	0		
Maintenance	129.64	2840	1775.53		
Miscellaneous	0	74.29	118.21		
House and Grounds - Other	2070.81	0	0	7000	5000
Total House and Grounds	4123.64	5000	7001.29	7000	5000
Total 6180 · Insurance	2535	2445	2434	3000	2800
Total 6390 · Utilities	2524.68	3135.49	2489.48	3100	2900
Total Meeting House	9183.32	10580.49	11924.77	13100	10700
Meeting Support					
Pastoral Care Ctte	0	0	0		120
Transition (Nuts & Bolts) Ctte	0	158.48	0		
Communications Ctte	0	17	491.32	500	635
Accounting Expenses	33.94	0	0		
Total Advertising	154	94	80	100	100
Finance Ctte					
Miscellaneous	0	429.64	0		
Bookkeeping	1092.5	1123.3	1650	1800	1800
Postage	0	31.6	62.69	91	90
Total Finance Ctte	1092.5	1584.54	1712.69	1891	1890
Library	138.05	351.63	221.42	400	400
Ministry and Counsel Ctte	0	7.44	16.69	300	300
6240 · Miscellaneous					
Checks	0	253.99	0		
SAYMA Rep	0	10	0		
6120 · Bank Service Charges	195	163	150		
Coffee Purchases	209.71	0	0		
Literature for visitors	76	0	0		
Office Supplies	77.55	0	88.55	300	300
Website	105	105	135	135	
6240 · Miscellaneous - Other	0	95.1	0	2000	2000
Total 6240 · Miscellaneous	663.26	536.99	373.55	2435	2300
Office Supplies	162.67	0	0		
6560 · Payroll Expenses	368.55	323.79	0	550	550
QLSP Scholarship	500	0	0		
Refreshments	82	0	0		
Religious Education Ctte					
Childcare	1534	812.5	603	1200	1200
First Day School	623.11	794.57	801.66	900	900
First Day School Coordinator	1000	0	0		
SAYF	659.71	1008.01	696.26	700	700
Total Religious Education Ctte	3816.82	2615.08	2100.92	2800	2800
Residential Retreats	1116.27	0	0		
Scholarship Fund Transfer	800	800	0		

Spiritual Enrichment Ctte	0	100	83.14	300	300
Total Meeting Support	8928.06	6588.95	5079.73	9276	9395
Outreach					
Transfer to Outreach Fund	0	5000	0	2400	4595
Total 6140 · General Outreach	2960	119	0		
Total Peace and Earth Ctte	40	273.05	290.36	500	500
Total Quaker Outreach	3000	50	0		
SAYMA Dues	4400	4400	3510	3510	3510
Total Outreach	10400	9842.05	3800.36	6410	8605
Total Expense	28511.38	27096.14	20804.86	28786	28700
Net Ordinary Income	29.08	2593.48	-424.11	0	0
Net Income	29.08	2593.48	-424.11	0	0

Marriage Procedure, Part III

The Ad-Hoc Committee on Marriage Under the Care of the Meeting presented its draft of Part III, Queries for those Considering Marriage, of the Marriage Procedure for the Meeting's review and approval.

Evan Richardson presented the draft, explaining that it reflected research of four different Faith and Practice documents. The Ad-Hoc Committee on Marriage Under the Care of the Meeting also drafted Part III to be as inclusive as possible without regard to gender.

A Friend amplified the tone of the introductory paragraph and said he believed that the intent and purpose of Part III is to provide a prospective Clearness Committee with guidance about what types of questions that might be asked – not that they are required to ask the questions or use the exact wording.

Friends agreed that the queries should be considered as tools that can be used while being open to leading of the spirit. Friends agreed it was important to remember that the queries are not a list of rules or mandates, and that Part III's language is guiding, not directive.

A Friend expressed his wishes that the queries reflect a procedure that aims for marriages that last. Another Friend expressed her belief, based on first-hand experience of her own Clearness Committee for Marriage Under the Care of the Meeting that the queries reflect this desire.

Many Friends thanked the Ad-Hoc Committee on Marriage Under the Care of the Meeting and said Part III was a wonderful product and had been carefully considered.

One Friend asked if it would be possible to include a separate paragraph that attends to the spiritual life of the couple so that it resonates with the community of the Meeting. Another Friend added that such a paragraph would only enhance an already wonderful document.

Friends approved Part III: Queries for those Considering Marriage, with an addition to paragraph six.

Another Friend expressed gratitude for the wonderful job the document does in guiding a Clearness Committee in its work on behalf of those seeking marriage.

Marriage Procedure Part III: Queries for those Considering Marriage:

The following queries can be used by couples to explore their leading for such a commitment, even before requesting marriage under the care of the Meeting. They are also for use by appointed clearness committees when meeting with couples who have requested marriage under the care of the Meeting. Given that the foundation for the clearness process is worship, these queries are offered merely as guides to the process. The committee and the couple are asked to remain open to leadings of the Spirit as they seek clearness together. Other queries which arise out of worship are welcome.

What hopes and expectations do you have for your marriage? What concerns do you have about your future together? Have you shared these with each other?

What values and behaviors do you hope to use as the foundation for your relationship?

What aspects of your relationship do you see as strengths to draw upon as you build your life together? What aspects do you see as possible challenges that may need your attention over time?

What do you have in common with each other? In what ways do you differ from each other? Have you explored these questions in the context of different aspects of building a life together? For instance, do you know what you can expect from each other in regards to issue such as communication; establishing and maintaining a home; developing and maintaining friendships, relationships, and interests outside of the marriage; finances; employment; developing a family; sexuality; fidelity; accommodating each other's tastes and habits; accommodating each other's economic and cultural backgrounds; shared interests; advancing educational and career goals of both partners; and other possible areas of life together?

What role do you want Quakerism and Quaker testimonies to play in your marriage relationship? What role does spirituality play in your lives individually and as a couple? What role would you anticipate spiritual education playing in your lives, should you decide to build a family?

Are you aware of any impediments to your marriage? If you have been married before or have children from a previous marriage, what, if any, effects

will each have on your relationship? What support and/or challenges can you expect from your families of origin? What about your existing friends and/or community? Are there any legal, financial, or medical situations that could create challenges for you or even make it impossible to enter freely into marriage?

If your marriage is in any way unconventional, how do you intend to meet any obstacles that may arise? Have you considered what support systems or efforts you may need to nurture and protect your relationship and the life you plan to build together?

Have you considered the legal aspects of marriage? Are you aware of what legal options are available to you? What are the potential benefits and the potential downsides of taking steps to legalize your marriage and/or to provide legal protections for your marriage? Do you want to file your marriage with the State of North Carolina, should this step be available to you?

What would you like from the Meeting in regards to your relationship? Why are you asking to be married under the care of the Meeting?

Are you familiar with the traditions of unprogrammed Friends wedding ceremonies? Do you anticipate planning a ceremony that may differ from these practices or may include elements from another faith tradition?

NOTE: It was suggested that we reformat the queries so that they do not appear in paragraph form, but, rather, be organized topically. We will revisit paragraph seven once we take time to discern the role of the oversight committee and the meeting, particularly the role of both in legally registering marriages with the State of NC.

Communications Committee Report

Steve Livingston presented the following Communications Committee report:

Communications Committee has met twice since last reporting, on 11/6 and 12/4. Active committee members are Julie Moser, Steve Livingston, Gary Briggs, and Kieron Mann. Ours is an open committee and we welcome more participation.

We obtained a computer for the Meetinghouse several weeks ago but were unable to get it working correctly until, after extensive frustration, we determined that the Uninterruptable Power Supply in the Meeting office was defective. It has been replaced by a new surge protector donated by a Friend. We intend to purchase a UPS next year, and have included funds for this purchase in our proposed budget. The computer is now available for use by Meeting committees and personnel. We ask that prospective users have an orientation with Steve or Kieron before using.

We currently have a good quality CRT monitor donated by the committee but

intend to purchase an LCD monitor at the beginning of next year and have included funds for the purchase in our proposed 2008 budget.

For internet service, we recommend the Meeting subscribe to MAIN, and we recommend that Meeting pay the going rate of \$150 annually rather than applying for a discount. We feel the cost is reasonable enough to leave a potential discount available to someone more needy. MAIN is already our domain host, and we include in our 2008 budget the \$135 fee for hosting our website.

We are pleased to report to Meeting that Julie Moser has agreed to serve as Newsletter Editor, and we are prepared to resume publication of the Meeting's newsletter starting the first month of 2008. There are two significant changes that require prior approval by the Meeting.

First, Meeting decided in the early 90's that the primary purpose of the newsletter was to disseminate the official account of the monthly Meeting for Business. We note that since the newsletter has ceased publication, the account of the business meeting has been published on our website, and that a process has been put in place to provide written copy for those few Friends who do not have online access. We recommend that this practice continue as it stands. We recommend that the newsletter contain a synopsis of the account, with the proviso that "action minutes" always be included verbatim. We recommend that the primary purpose of the newsletter be "to facilitate community building among Asheville Friends".

Second, at end of Steve Livingston's tenure as Newsletter Editor, there had begun a shift in focus from producing a printed newsletter to producing the newsletter online. We recommend completing this shift, with the newsletter posted on our website in PDF format on the first Monday of each month. We intend to print out 20 copies of the newsletter to distribute to those Friends who don't have online access, as well as a dozen or so distant Friends whom we believe may still hold an interest in the life of the Meeting. Kieron will print these copies at his workplace. Steve will draw up the list of distant Friends. We intend to include a solicitation for funds in the mailing to distant Friends.

We recently sent out a questionnaire to determine if our listserv was meeting the expectations of our subscribers. We have so far received a dozen responses. We would like to receive a few dozen more. Our new website will be going up in the next month or so, and we invite Friends to contribute content and Quaker-oriented links. We ask Meeting committees to let us know what you are currently working on, what are your current concerns and projects. The website will be updated on a weekly basis.

Our next meeting will be at 6 p.m. on 1/1/2008. We will meet as usual at the home of Gary Briggs, carpooling from the Meetinghouse due to restricted parking – and to save gas!

Friends approved the Communication Committee’s request that the Asheville Friends Meeting Newsletter continue primarily in electronic form, that the account of meeting minutes include “action minutes” verbatim and a synopsis of the Meeting, and that the newsletter’s primary purpose is to “facilitate community building among Asheville Friends.”

A Friend reminded meeting that committees are trusted to do their work and that consideration for MAIN does not need to be approved by the meeting.

A Friend asked if there could be statistics from Ministry & Counsel about the newsletter list so that it includes distant members. Steve will contact those individuals to ensure our list is as inclusive as it can be.

House and Grounds Report

George Gjelfriend presented the House and Grounds Committee’s report. Two items that were to be brought to the Meeting for consideration were tabled until the committee can review the impact of a \$6,000 Emergency Fund – reserve dollars House and Grounds was not aware existed.

Peace and Earth Committee Report

Kitti Reynolds presented the Peace and Earth Committee Report, and reminded the Meeting that on the 23rd of the twelfth month at 9:30 a.m. at the Meeting House, Peace and Earth will sponsor a discussion that will focus on sharing how being Friends and associated with Friends impacts how we celebrate the holidays

A Friend asked if the Peace and Earth Committee maintained contact with Roy Taylor (our SAYMA contact), and the committee does.

Other

A Friend mentioned that they have many years worth of archives of the Meeting, and is working to get files in order. The question of whether the files should be paper or electronic was posed.

The question will be referred to the Communications Committee, which will consider the question and make a recommendation at the next Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business.

A Friend reminded the Meeting that Young Adult Friends will have a retreat at the Meeting House on Easter weekend.

2:30 p.m.: The Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business concluded with a period of silent worship.