

Minutes – Meeting for Worship for the Conduct of Business Asheville Friends Meeting – First Month 2009

Barbara Esther, Clerk
Jen Rhode, Co-Recording Clerk

Attendance

Gary Briggs, Bobby Carter, Jim Cavener, David Clements, Tom Edelston (*visiting from Raleigh Monthly Meeting*), Gjeorge Gjelfriend, Kristi Gjelfriend, Rylin Hansen, Pat Johnson, Katherine Kowal, Steve Livingston, Rusty Maynard, Phil Neal, Kitti Reynolds, Alan Robinson, Adrienne Weir

Opening Worship at 12:24 p.m.

Reading

Effective prophecy energises and encourages people. It acknowledges their failures and inadequacies, but it doesn't blame – it comforts and consoles. It believes in people. It is an invitation to return to God. . . So what do we need in prophecy that will enable people to hear the voice of God? It is very simple. Jean Leclerq, a Benedictine, has said:

We must love the age we live in. From the point of view of faith, the best age for each of us is the one God has placed us in, the one he has given us, and which we must give back to him.

We must love the age we live in. Sometimes this is very hard to do, but it is our task.

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. (1 Cor. 13)

Effective prophets work from a place of love. They nurture us, they inspire us to engage with our faith in deeper and deeper ways. We are inspired, we lead committed lives which return us always to our spiritual core. It is circular. Our outward lives are shaped from within, our actions bring us closer to God, and we live God's truth in the world.

From *An Orientation to Prophecy* by Marion McNaughton

Agenda Review

The agenda was approved as written.

Approval of Minutes – Eleventh Month and Twelfth Month

Both months' minutes were approved as written and posted.

Treasurer's Report: Adrienne Weir

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Adrienne noted that all items had been reconciled, and that all line items were correct. She pointed out that interest items were greater than anticipated, and that

Retreat Items (with registration costs exceeding actual costs) are included in this budget. Also, the Miscellaneous budget was decreased, and the Religious Education line item was increased to include the approved expenditure of the cost of the shed purchased by this committee.

Rusty Maynard asked about FCNL's status as a non-profit organization. David Clements stated that FCNL is not a 501 C3 tax deductible organization. Gary commented about the way in which the West Knoxville Friends Meeting handled this issue, and Adrienne said that if Rusty did more research about this issue we could bring it up for future discernment.

Kitti Reynolds asked how much of the 2008 Peace and Earth General Outreach budget had been expended in 2008; Adrienne answered that \$350 had been spent. Thus, \$2150 remains in the Peace and Earth General Outreach budget, plus \$330.67 in Peace and Earth project funds. Adrienne explained that Peace and Earth typically expends the previous year's General Outreach budgeted amount at the beginning of the following calendar year, which is why this budget amount appears doubled.

Barbara Esther provided further clarification about Peace and Earth's budget process. She then asked if Peace and Earth could expend their budgeted General Outreach monies within a given calendar year, rather than waiting. Kitti responded that it was valuable to meet once annually (at the end of the year) to decide how to expend monies on peace, social justice, and environmental concerns (equal distribution among these 3 categories). Because Quaker Outreach does not vary much from year to year, those monies are distributed at the beginning of the year (as soon as the budget has been set).

Rusty said that he felt that funds for non-Quaker organizations (General Outreach) should be expended in the same way that Quaker Outreach is now budgeted, unless those organizations have emergencies. Adrienne pointed out that we decided the General Outreach expenditure process in a previous minuted item (late 2007 or early 2008). Rusty asked that the issue of General Outreach expenditure procedures be revisited at a future Business Meeting.

Barbara expressed her appreciation to Adrienne for the budget and year-end summaries, and then asked for further questions about the summarized 2008 budget. David said that it would be possible to forward part of the \$917 remaining in the general fund (\$313) to P&E General Outreach for the next year, with the rest going to House and Grounds. He pointed out that forwarding project funds into the next calendar year has not been our typical practice. Kitti pointed out that she was really just asking for the remaining 2008 P&E monies to be carried over to be spent from the 2008 outreach budget, and that P&E was happy to keep following precedent.

Barbara asked for P&E consider spending those monies in November rather than in January. Kitti said that P&E would attempt to do that. Katherine Kowal pointed out that the once-per-year review could happen at any point, not necessarily in January/November. She asked how Special Funds in the budget (i.e. M&C Special Needs) get replenished. Adrienne said she has not replenished any such funds this year. David said that the M&C Needs Fund line was added in 2000, and has been used once since then (in 2007). He said that there had been no requests to replenish that fund, but that those monies could be replenished in response to committee requests.

The Treasurer's Report was accepted as written.

Barbara asked Adrienne about the status of her term as the AFM Treasurer. Adrienne expressed willingness to do Finance Committee work, but pointed out that her work and school obligations would limit the amount of time she could devote to this. Thus, Nominating Committee still needs to find a replacement treasurer.

Committee Reports

Communications Committee: Steve Livingston

Communications Committee report

1/11/09

Communications Committee met on 1/7 at the home of Steve Livingston. Present were Steve Livingston (clerk), Kieron Mann, and Gary Briggs.

We reviewed the new website design and identified a number of minor issues with it that can be easily resolved. We decided there was no reason to delay implementing the new design. We will inform the Meeting when it has been posted and encourage Friends to visit and to give us feedback on the design. It is much more interactive than our current design – it's easier to navigate, it has categories and tags for individual entries, and it is searchable.

We considered our budget for 2009 and decided that \$400 is the correct amount. This will cover the expenses for our website hosting and dial-up browsing service, and the cost of printing our Meeting Directory and for one replacement toner cartridge for our printer. We don't foresee any other expenses for our computer equipment that need to be budgeted in the coming year.

We are willing to supervise the Meeting's advertising in the coming year but feel it is prudent for the advertising budget to remain a separate line item rather than incorporating it into our committee budget.

We regret the delay in publishing the Directory. We had intended to be done with it by the end of last year. We have set a new target date for publication as of 3/1. We will begin passing around a signup immediately. We remind Friends that the Directory is not intended to be an all-inclusive list of members and attenders. It is intended to enable Friends who are active in the life of the Meeting to maintain contact with one another. As was the case in putting together the 2007 Directory, it will be up to individual Friends to decide if they are active in the life of the Meeting.

David asked which committee had previously supervised advertising. Steve answered that Communications Committee had agreed to take this over from Ministry and Counsel Committee.

The Communications Committee report was approved as written.

Finance Committee: Pat Johnson

Pat presented the proposed 2009 draft budget. We discussed the budget, with the hopes of shaping a final budget for approval at the Second Month Meeting for Worship for Business.

[click here to view report](#)

Pat pointed out that 2008 expenditures in most categories did not meet budgeted amounts. She also noted that the last column was for the proposed 2009 budget, and included additional budget reductions. We went through the proposed budget line-by-line to solicit questions for clarification and comments.

Gjeorge provided clarification about the House and Grounds budget. We discussed eliminating the House and Grounds reserve, and instead adopting the practice that surplus monies from the previous year's budget would be forwarded into the House and Grounds reserve fund. We decided to forward this to the Finance Committee for consideration and to maintain the House and Grounds reserve line as budgeted.

Gjeorge recommended that Ministry and Counsel Committee's Needs Fund (traditionally called funds for sufferance) be replenished. He asked that it be put in their budget, earmarked for transfer from M&C to a (newly-named) Sufferance Fund.

Steve pointed out that, this year, most computer-related office supplies budgeted amounts had been paid by Communications Committee, eliminating the need for a line item for office supplies. Adrienne pointed out that archival work would need office supplies, and Barbara pointed out that we might need stationery, etc. We

decided to keep the Office Supplies line item (\$100) as is. Barbara said that, as Clerk, she would oversee this line item in the budget.

Adrienne clarified that the Child Care line of the Religious Education budget was reduced, but not below the amount spent in 2008.

Alan said that he was reluctant to reduce outreach during these precarious economic times. Gary pointed out that, since the Meeting had a budget cushion, we should keep outreach expenditures at 2008 levels; others concurred. The Business Meeting recommended to the Finance Committee that these amounts be returned to 2008 amounts. To determine how to expend General Outreach monies, Barbara recommended that all attend the P&E committee meeting next First Day at 9:30 (during First Hour).

Katherine asked for qualification about the Scholarship Fund line in the budget. After discussion the proposed 2009 budgeted amount was reduced by half (to \$200).

Pat asked Ministry and Council to examine the Meeting's "active member" number, as SAYMA dues are \$65 per active member. This could reduce our Meeting expenditures.

Proposed budget lines for the Hospitality Committee, Pastoral Care Committee, Communications Committee, Finance Committee, Library Committee, Spiritual Enrichment Committee, Miscellaneous, and Payroll Expenses were accepted as written without further discussion.

Kristi asked how we would deal with uncertainties about income, or if there would be trouble were there to be reductions in donations. David pointed out that donations were substantially less this past year than in previous years (about \$16,000 vs. \$23,000). Steve said that our monies in reserve provided some assurance the 2009 budgeted expenses will be covered. Gary reminded all present that, since we are a faith-based organization, it is not yet panic time.

Barbara thanked the Finance Committee and all Friends present for their work. The Finance Committee report was approved as written. George expressed the sense of the Meeting in thanking the Finance Committee of the clarity of the report.

Other

Yearly Meeting (SAYMA) Workshop Opportunity

The deadline for submission of workshop proposals for the 2009 SAYMA gathering is February 13th, 2009. The theme of SAYMA's Yearly Meeting (to be held June 10-13, at Warren Wilson College) is "Spirit Woven into Our Lives: a Tapestry of Light". Photos of Alice Brown's weaving will be used in the

publicity for the gathering. Jim asked that Alice's children receive copies of the Yearly Meeting Program and pre-mailed poster. Barbara agreed to see that they receive them.

Closing Worship: We concluded with a period of worship at 2:08 p.m.