

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

Asheville Friends Meeting

3rd Month 9, 2014

Clerk: Laura Lane

Recording Clerk: Steve Livingston

Attendance: Nancy Kuykendall, Katherine Kowal, Lauren Adams, Kristi Gjelfriend, Patti Hughes, Edie Patrick, Margaret Normile, George Gjelfriend, Ruth Stewart, Jim and Gail Hipkins, Adrienne Weir, Gita Larsen, Pat Johnson, Susan Oehler, Jim Cavener, Sarah Jane Thomas, Rylin Hansen, Alan Robinson, Joy Gossett, Jen Rhode Ward, Barbara Esther, Bobby Carter, Scotty Utz

Meeting began at with a moment of silence at 12 noon

The clerk opened the meeting by reading the children's book "The Way To Start a Day":

*The way to start a day is this -*

*Go outside and face the east and greet the sun with some kind of blessing or chant or song that you made yourself and keep for early morning.*

*The way to make the song is this -*

*Don't try to think what words to use until you're standing there alone.*

*When you feel the sun you'll feel the song, too.*

*But don't think you're the only one who ever worked that magic.*

*Your caveman brothers knew what to do.*

*Your cavewoman sisters knew, too.*

*They sang to help the sun come up and lifted their hands to its power.*

*A morning needs to be sung to.*

*A new day needs to be honored.*

*People have always known that.*

*Didn't they chant at dawn in the sun temples of Peru?*

*And leap and sway to Aztec flutes in Mexico?*

*And drum sunrise songs in the Congo?*

*And ring a thousand small gold bells in China?*

*Didn't the Pharaohs of Egypt say the only sound at dawn should be the sound of songs that please the morning sun?*

*They knew what songs to sing.*

*People always seemed to know.*

*And everywhere they knew what gifts the sun wanted.*

*In some places they gave gold.*

*In some places they gave flowers.*

*In some places, sacred smoke blown to the four directions.*

*Some places, feathers and good thoughts.*

*Some places, fire.*

*But everywhere they knew to give "something".*

*And everywhere they knew to turn their faces eastward as the sun came up.*

*Some people still know.*

*When the first pale streak of light cuts through the darkness, wherever they are, those people make offerings and send mysterious strong songs to the sun.*

*They know exactly how to start a day.*

*Their blessings float on the wind over Pueblo cornfields in New Mexico, and you hear their morning songs in villages in Africa, and they salute the sunrise ceremonially in the high cold mountains of Peru.*

*Today long before dawn they were already waiting in Japan with prayers and they were gathering at little shrines in India with marigolds in their hands.*

*They were bathing in the sacred Ganges River as the sun came up.*

*And high on a mesa in Arizona they were holding a baby toward the sun.*

*They were speaking the child's new name so the sun would hear and know that child.*

*It had to be sunrise.*

*And it had to be that first sudden moment.*

*That's when the power of life is in the sky.*

*Some people say there is a new dawn every day, that it begins its life at dawn and lives for one day only.*

*They say you have to welcome it.*

*You have to make the sun happy.*

*You have to make it a good day for it.*

*You have to make a good world for it to live its one-day life in.*

*And the way to start, they say, is just by looking east at dawn.*

*When they look east tomorrow, you can too.*

*Your song will be an offering and you'll be one more person in one more place at one more time in the world saying hello to the sun, letting it know you are there.*

*If the sky turns a color sky never was before just watch it.*

*That's part of the magic.*

*That's the way to start a day.*

The agenda was approved as presented.

Regarding Finance report in 1<sup>st</sup> month meeting: Finance asked for an increase in their budget in part to update Quickbooks but also to purchase another computer.

Also, under attendance for both 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> months, Barbara Esther was present.

**Minutes of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> month 2014 meetings were approved with those corrections.**

#### Report from AFSC

Patti reported on the annual meeting of the AFSC corporation, of which she is a member. She reflected that there is so much happening at different levels involving the organization. She will work with the appropriate committees to bring more information to the Meeting.

AFSC allows Way to open: they allow change, they allow progress to occur, they allow peace to come about through asking the communities in which they choose to work what they need and how AFSC can support this.

AFSC has approved their first African American clerk, Jim Lord.

Patti was happy to report that AFSC is financially stable again through a recovery process that included severe staff reduction. She will provide a treasurer's report upon request. The size of the Board has been reduced as well, and the number of regions has been reduced even though they still cover the same geographical area.

She came to a fuller understanding of the BDS (Boycott/Divestment/Sanctions) Movement through a program presentation she attended.

AFSC paid for one rep from SAYMA to attend this meeting. There is an ongoing controversy between the two organizations regarding what defines AFSC as a "Quaker organization".

AFSC will begin its Capital Campaign soon.

The clerk thanked Patti for bringing this report back to the Meeting.

#### FGC Planning Meeting Proposal

Jen Rhode Ward reported that Asheville Friends have been asked to host a planning meeting for the summer 2015 FGC gathering which will take place in Cullowhee. Terry Graden, who is coordinating the Planning Committee, has not been able to find any other Monthly Meeting that can do this.

The meeting will take place 5/2-5/4, and will end before Meeting for Worship. The ad

hoc committee would coordinate hospitality for 30 people more or less. The host Meeting would provide airport/train/bus station transportation (to and from), housing, and some meals, as well as beverages and snacks during the meeting time. There may be a need for child care. There will be technology needs such as a projector, perhaps a photocopier. Individual hosts would be expected to provide breakfast Saturday and Sunday. Some younger committee members might choose to overnight at the Meetinghouse. Host Meeting would provide Friday dinner and Saturday lunch at the Meetinghouse. The committee plans to have a restaurant outing on Saturday night.

Clerk asked if we felt able and willing to take this on, and who would serve on an ad hoc committee to make these arrangements. A Friend suggested that some folks at Swannanoa Valley would pitch in if we coordinate, even though they have already declined to be the host Meeting.

In response to clerk's inquiries, a half dozen Friends offered that they could host an overnight guest., a dozen said they could help with transportation and a similar number offered to help with the communal meals.

A Friend expressed joy at the opportunity to cook for this group of folks, also offered to be on the ad hoc committee. He and another Friend are likely to be serving on the FGC Planning Committee, therefore at least two people would not require housing. He pointed out that we are the closest significant Monthly Meeting to Cullowhee so it seems right for us to do this. He pitched for folks to plan on attending the Gathering since it will be so close.

A Friend asked if we could respond to Terry's request positively even though short of decision to form the ad hoc committee. Jen explained that their business meeting is coming up next week so they need a more definite response. A Friend asked if we could contact Swannanoa Valley immediately to find out their level of support.

Adrienne pointed out that there is only one shower in the Meetinghouse, so other arrangements might be needed if a significant number overnight here. She expressed the sense that an ad hoc committee would rise up naturally without the need for immediate reassurance from Swannanoa Valley.

A Friend expressed what a great opportunity we have with the Gathering happening so close, and her feeling of Meeting being led to take on this task.

Clerk suggested we sit with this for a few minutes, suggested that we might be short only of overnight accommodations, that we should let the Planning Committee know that some folks may have to stay in hotels. A Friend pointed out that there are several hostels in Asheville now.

A Friend pointed out that once we form an ad hoc committee, it will be up to the committee to work out the logistics. A Friend pointed out that the size of the Planning Committee is not much different than that of SAYMA Rep meetings, which are

sometimes hosted by Meetings much smaller than ours. The Friend was confident that we will get enough help from Swannanoa Valley to house everyone who needs it.

**Friends approved an ad hoc committee to coordinate hosting of FGC Planning Committee meeting 5/2-5/4/2014. Barbara Esther, Adrienne Weir, Katherine Kowal, Lauren Adams, Alan Robinson, and Jim Cavener will serve on the committee.**

Jim Cavener agreed to convene the first meeting of the ad hoc committee. Jen will report to Terry that we have formed the committee and she will hear from Jim regarding further plans.

### Peace and Earth

Katherine Kowal returned us to the question of hosting the Vets for Peace meeting in July. She said we should expect up to eight attenders, a much smaller number than we thought last month. Peace and Earth has identified sufficient hosts for this smaller number of guests: Susan Oehler, Steve Livingston, Adrienne Weir, Ed Brown, and Chrsi Berg. Susan will coordinate, and make sure they are apprised of the Meetinghouse rules.

### Finance

Pat distributed the Treasurer's Report and reviewed the numbers. She advised that the rental income is \$511.25 not \$75 as shown on the report. There is a problem with data not showing up in Quickbooks. Contributions are about \$2250 at this point. Most of the expenses shown on the report are actually a fund transfer, not really an expense. Expenditures for gas were high due to the cold weather.

Pat reported that the new Self Help checking account has \$4000+ in it. She reported that the Wells Fargo account is still not closed as she is awaiting confirmation that an automatic draft has been moved by the City from the old account to Self Help.

Friends united in gratitude for the care being given to the transfer from Wells Fargo to SHCU.

### Joint Meeting of Finance and Peace & Earth

There is currently a \$2000 surplus in the General Fund. Finance and Peace and Earth Committees met together on 2/16 to consider a process by which this \$2000 could be put to good use. They offered the following recommendation to the Meeting:

*The Peace and Earth and Finance Committees recommend to Meeting that Meeting reactivate the Outreach Fund to receive contributions from individuals in the Meeting community. The Peace and Earth Committee will designate a suitable recipient or recipients. Once individual contributions to the Outreach Fund reach \$2000, Meeting will add \$2000 from General Fund. The Peace and Earth Committee will promptly*

*disburse the entire amount of the fund.*

*The Finance Committee continues to recommend that Meeting maintain enough in the General Fund to pay for the upcoming year's activities if contributions fall short. It appears that after spending the \$2000 for outreach we will still have enough for the needs of the General Fund. We recommend that House and Grounds Committee work with the Finance Committee to determine how much money we will need in the short term for maintenance, repair, and replacement of the building and grounds and for any contemplated capital improvements.*

Finance Committee presented some ballpark reserves they felt would be needed for furnace, interior and exterior painting, general budget, roof, and grounds. Clerk of House and Grounds stated that that committee has begun working on long range planning and may end up with different ideas from what was presented. As Way opens, House and Grounds and Finance should get together and arrive at a more seasoned estimate of our long range financial needs.

Clerk suggested that we can proceed with accumulating individual contributions to fulfill the initial \$2000 goal.

A Friend expressed concern about current pressing needs, and was reassured that the initial goal does not involve Building funds.

Friends expressed concern that the recommendation imposes upon Peace and Earth to disburse the funds as soon as the \$2000 goal is reached. Clerk of Peace and Earth speculated that Peace and Earth might specify a donation larger than \$4000 in which case they would defer disbursement until more money is accumulated.

A Friend identified the Meeting's motivation for spending idle money as an aspect of good financial stewardship, and cautioned circumspection. The Friend warned that we not overspend money before we have determined what will be needed, that House and Grounds should be given the time they need to make this determination. Another Friend cautioned that our current financial system is unsustainable and likely to crash within the next 20 years, and we ought to take that into consideration in our long range planning process.

In response to another concern, clerk clarified that contributors would be instructed designate their contributions specifically for the outreach fund.

Friend expressed discomfort with the idea of "matching funds", that it felt too much like an enticement or reward. Another Friend expressed no discomfort, describing it as a "goal driven activity" that would inspire people to give. Another Friend offered that putting the \$2000 from the general fund in first to "prime the pump" would similarly inspire people to give, and might mitigate the feeling that it is a reward or enticement.

Clerk observed that we are not yet in unity as to how to embark on this process, and as

Peace and Earth does not yet have a recommended recipient for this fund, that we should season this recommendations further. A Friend cautioned that we not lose the energy being put into this plan, that we stay open to further recommendations.

Clerk reminded Friends that House and Grounds must be afforded the chance to work out some recommendations for long range plans before we have any further discussion about what to do with additional funds that have accumulated in the Building Fund.

Closing worship

There being no further business, meeting adjourned with silence at 1:35 p.m.