

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

Asheville Friends Meeting

6th Month 8, 2014

Clerk: Jennifer Rhode Ward

Recording Clerk: Steve Livingston

Attendance: Kitti Reynolds, Laura Maynard Lane, Edie Patrick, Barbara Esther, Katherine Kowal, Gjeorge Gjelfriend, Kristi Gjelfriend, Bobby Carter, Jim and Gail Hipkins, Adrienne Weir, Rylin Hansen, Patti Hughes, Margaret Normile, Adam Thomson, Rusty Maynard, Lauren Adams

Meeting began at with a moment of silence at 11:55 a.m.

The clerk read a poem by Camilla Hewson Flinterman called "Thoughts in Meeting for Worship"

*We come to this place by many different paths,
bearing our burdens,
bringing our gifts.
Here, where our paths intersect,
where our journeys of the Spirit come together,
We become as spokes of a great wheel –
centered and united by the hub –
by the Spirit,
which lightens our burdens,
and uses our gifts
in the service of Love.*

The agenda was approved with no additions or amendments

Approval of minutes from 5th month 2014 meeting were deferred until next meeting for business.

Finance

Adrienne read the Treasurer's report as Pat was not present.

Our listing in Friend's Journal is higher because the new rate is \$35.00/line/year up from \$22/line/year. P & E decided to place an ad in the Vets for Peace Convention Booklet for \$125.00 and they have not decided if this will be part of the General Outreach so Pat put it in the P & E Committee which puts them over-budget.

Most concerning to me is the increase in our insurance. It was due by June 1 so Pat felt she had to pay it rather than leave us uncovered. She talked with Wendy Baird at General Insurance who said they work with several insurance companies that offer

policies to faith groups and they have several churches some of which are on Haywood Road that have their insurance with them. Ms. Baird said there would probably be a substantial fee if we end our current contract so it will be a year before we can actually change anything. She suggested that we bring our current policy in and they will evaluate it and look for other options for us. Pat is willing to set up an appointment to take our policy in and discuss our situation but she would prefer that at least one other person go with her. She asks if anyone is led to help with this insurance search.

Adrienne reported that she and Pat will be consulting with an insurance broker to see if we can find a policy that is less expensive than what we are currently carrying. Insurance has gone up by another 8%, and was already the single largest expense in our budget. We may be able to reduce or eliminate workers' comp as our current workers are contractors rather than employees.

Transfer to the general fund is shown in the all funds report, showing the cash flow for the large contributions we made. Adrienne pointed out that the rental income may not be accurate as it reflects the amount that has been invoiced rather than what has been collected.

Friends accepted the Treasurer's report with thanks.

Peace and Earth

Patti Hughes distributed a pamphlet about liaising with AFSC and offered an opportunity for someone to serve as liaison. Responsibilities would include informing monthly meeting of AFSC's work, encouraging involvement/support, participating in a monthly conference call with other liaisons and perhaps an annual fundraising project for AFSC.

A Friend inquired as to the religious affiliation of AFSC staff members. Recording clerk reminded Friends that the AFSC Board has informed our Yearly Meeting that they do not ask candidates for staff positions what their religious affiliation is.

A Friend recounted his experience in Raleigh Friends Meeting regarding the work of AFSC liaison. Another Friend recalled his experience working with AFSC prior to his affiliation with the Society of Friends. Those Friends who spoke united in their perception that regardless of the affiliation of staff, they work together in good Quaker order sustaining and nurturing Quaker values. Patti united with this observation from her experience working in Quaker schools where some of the teachers may not be members of the Society. She observed that involving non-Quakers in the work of the Society provides a great opening for differently affiliated seekers to become Friends.

A Friend felt moved to volunteer to serve in the liaison position but not until next year, leaving open the possibility for some other Friend to serve.

Friends approved our monthly meeting providing a liaison to AFSC.

Friends who are led to serve in this position are asked to consult with Patti and the Peace and Earth Committee.

Friends were not united that the name of prospective liaison person(s) should be brought forth by Peace and Earth rather than by Nominating. Clerk asked that Peace and Earth seek person or persons to fill the position. A Friend wondered whether Peace and Earth was willing to take on this responsibility. Clerk asked if we needed more time to season this. A Friend suggested that the summer is a good season to take our time and let way open as it will.

Clerk suggested that clerks of Nominating and Peace and Earth confer along with Patti to find way forward. Gjeorge noted that at present he is the only active member of Nominating. A Friend suggested we acknowledge that we are led in this direction and let way open as it will.

Clerk's end of service

Laura expressed appreciation on behalf of herself and co-clerk Jen for the experience of clerking meeting for the past year, but regretfully neither of them will be able to commit to a second year. She said that she and Jen would have to step down from the position no later than September.

A Friend expressed thanks to the co-clerks for bringing their various skills to clerking the meeting through the past year.

Nominating

Gjeorge first reiterated that the committee is in dire need of new members. He then presented a proposal of clerk's duties.

Duties of the Clerk, June 2014

- (1) The primary duty of the Clerk is to attend to the business of the Meeting between Business Meetings. Including but not limited to:
 - (a) Attending to all incoming and outgoing mail
 - (b) Answering queries left on the Meeting's answering machine if the telephone answerer doesn't feel competent to do so.
 - (c) Making sure that certain SAYMA requests are met in a timely manner, such as the State of the Meeting report and the SAYMA census
 - (d) The Clerk can speak with the voice of the Meeting, unless prior approval of Meeting For Business is indicated.
- (2) The Clerk is responsible for setting the Business Meeting agenda.
- (3) The Clerk is responsible for seeing to it that the Business Meeting is facilitated. The

Clerk can delegate that position to a seasoned Friend, familiar with discerning the sense of the Meeting.

(4) If a Friend approaches the Clerk with a personal concern the Clerk may either refer the Friend to an appropriate committee, including M&C, or appoint a committee of willing, seasoned Friends to offer clearness or support.

(5) The Clerk is empowered to call a special Business Meeting for any matter the Clerk deems needs more immediate action than waiting for the next MFB. If at all possible, the Clerk will announce such a Business Meeting to all active Friends as expeditiously as possible.

(6) The Clerk is a member "ex officio" of all AFM committees. The Clerk is expected to attend meetings of M&C if at all possible. M&C will offer support, clearness, and feedback as way opens. In the case of conflict or discord within AFM, M&C should be considered as the Committee of first choice; although the Clerk may appoint special committees as per the clerk's discretion.

Friends offered several suggested refinements of the description of the clerk's role. Friends asked that Gjeorge circulate a revised document for our seasoning and return the matter to next business meeting. Clerk spoke to the value of having co-clerks in terms of support and sharing of responsibilities. Another Friend expressed similar value in having an assistant clerk, with the added advantage of providing training for future clerking.

Other Concerns

Clerk informed Friends that there would be a business meeting in 7th month but not 8th month.

A Friend expressed dismay that the current co-clerks' terms are coming to an end so soon.

Closing worship

There being no further business, meeting adjourned with silence at 1:10 p.m.