

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
Asheville Friends Meeting
Eighth Month 13, 2017

Present: Edie Patrick; Kitti Reynolds; Bobby Carter; Satchel Loftis; Margaret Normile; Sharon Smith; Beth Eddy; Mike Eddy; Pat Johnson; Bob Lackey; Gita Larson; Jim Cavener; Nick Mimken; Rylin Hansen; Steve Livingston; Patti Hughes, Clerk; Barbara Esther, Recording Clerk.

Meeting began with a period of silent worship. The clerk asked us to listen carefully to one another today.

Friends accepted the agenda as prepared.

Approval of Seventh Month Minutes is postponed because they were late in being posted.

Announcements:

The celebration of our 50 years as a monthly meeting: Friends are asked to respond so that adequate preparations can be completed, such as, buying chicken and veggie burgers to be grilled and having enough chairs and tables. A sign-up sheet is available for contributions of food and/or services (parking, set-up, clean-up, e.g.)

Meeting for worship for the conduct of business will not be held in September. We will have our next meeting for business in October.

Treasurer's/Finance Committee Report - Satchel Loftis, Treasurer

The Finance Committee offers three items to Meeting. 1. Recommendation re: Racial Justice Committee reimbursement inquiry

The Racial Justice Committee has requested the Finance Committee pay for Sharon Smith's travel to Philadelphia to support Avis Wanda McLintock at PYM out of the Meeting's General Undesignated Fund (aka General Fund), which holds money accumulated over the years from annual budget surpluses that have not been otherwise restricted for a specific use, such as Meetinghouse improvements. The RJC has requested the Scholarship Committee pay for Avis's hospitality expenses. The expenditures were made by individuals who are requesting reimbursement.

\$326.37 for plane fare \$202.86 for other expenses \$102.00 for hospitality expenses

The Finance Committee met on Friday, July 28 to consider these items. A couple of options are available.

First, the RJC committee has the discretion to reimburse individuals for these expenses out of their annual budget, as this activity was relevant to its work. The Finance Committee suggests this approach, as it most accurately reflects the activities undertaken by Meeting as a whole during the year. A direct reimbursement out of the General Undesignated would not do so.

It is understandable that the RJC has been reluctant to do so out of a concern these expenditures would drain resources from their planned activities for the year. Each AFM committee has the discretion to exceed their annual budget by 10% without prior approval from the Meeting. As well, it is important to realize that every expenditure undertaken by an AFM committee ultimately impacts the General Undesignated Fund. Money that has been budgeted but not spent will grow the Fund at the end of the year, while money that has been spent but not budgeted would reduce any surplus or create a deficit that would reduce the size of the Fund at the end of the year.

Another option is for the individuals to consider the expenditures a gift-in-kind to the Meeting and not seek reimbursement.

The Finance Committee recognized during this process that the Meeting's guidelines for releasing scholarship funds is ambiguous in this case. The committee recommends the Meeting review its policies for clarity and consider creating a new restricted fund for support of individuals who are not members or regular attenders.

2. Opportunity to raise funds during Asheville Friends Meeting's 50th year

The celebration of AFM's 50th year affords us the opportunity to look at our current and long-term financial needs, and consider mounting a fundraising campaign. In particular, Meeting could solicit contributions for any number of specific projects or restricted purpose. Based on recent areas of activity undertaken by Meeting, a small list of options to consider includes:

- The restricted Racial Justice Fund
- The restricted College-Age Friends Support Fund
- The restricted Meetinghouse Improvements Fund
- The restricted Scholarship Fund

The Finance Committee is also considering a project to increase contributions to Meeting through planned giving – contributions outside the familiar weekly gifts from members and attenders. Some ideas include:

- Bequests
- Stock gifts
- Retirement giving (e.g. 10% of a 403(b) or 401(k))

3. Regular budget update

The Treasurer humbly asks forgiveness for not providing a mid-year budget update at this Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business. Work commitments and the learning curve for the bookkeeping processes has precluded a comprehensive and current report.

The Treasurer does happily report that all contributions and other checks paid to Meeting recently have been properly recorded and will be deposited this week. All invoices, bills, payroll, and other financial obligations are current.

Friends are reminded that each committee has the flexibility to spend 10% over budget without prior approval of the meeting. Racial Justice Committee is asked to take advantage

of this by paying for the expenses incurred in supporting Sharon Smith's trip to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting from their budget.

The committee recommends that a scholarship fund be created to support Friends from outside of SAYMA when they attend our annual gathering. The committee will bring a plan forward in the future.

Specific areas of activity were highlighted that could be used to solicit contributions in a campaign to raise funds. Planned giving is also suggested as a way to support the work of the meeting.

A Friend asked whether a conversion of several First Day School rooms to an apartment for sanctuary has been discussed. Because that involves more discussion on the part of the meeting as a whole and the several committees which are impacted when such a change is made, this is not a decision that can be made hastily.

A budget update will be made in the future. Bills are being paid. The clerk asked that all committees consider spending their budgeted money as the year goes on, not wait until the end of the year. This practice allows the treasurer to handle the end-of-year budget demands more easily.

Committee Reports:

House and Grounds Committee - Nick Mimken

We discussed and agreed to present the installation of a roll up shade awning over the east windows at the monthly meeting for business. The purpose is to address complaints of the level of heat during meeting for worship. We hope to get a sense of the meeting's interest in this solution to the problem and feedback regarding how much a concern there is around the level of heat during the meeting. There are other options that Rusty and others may want to present.

A survey will be taken to judge the effect of the heat in summer on the attendance and ability to enjoy our meetings for worship. A workday held on August 26 will be an opportunity to prepare the house and grounds for our celebration on September 3rd. All Friends are urged to attend this work day.

Peace and Earth Committee - Pat Johnson

The committee requests & recommends that Meeting endorse & support the International Day of Peace in Asheville & Buncombe County. (See attachment 1) One Friend asked what we as a meeting are going to do to foster peace, in light of the hostility our meeting is experiencing. It was suggested that we hold a discussion of how to create peace in our own and in the wider community during second hour Spiritual Enrichment. This is a broader issue that can prod us to work toward peace.

Minute 1: Friends approved endorsement and support of the proclamation for the International Day of Peace. As a meeting we will need to follow up with action to work toward peace, both individually and in the wider community. One way that we will

continue to work toward peace is to hold discussion(s) in our meeting on the topic. Our witness to our belief in peace may need to take many other actions that show our belief that peaceful conflict-resolution is Spirit-based. This endorsement is a reminder to us that our actions need to be a reflection of our faith.

The 2nd agenda item is a request & recommendation that Meeting approve a minute on supporting the NC Commission of Inquiry on Torture (NCCIT) as follows:

Torture is inhumane, immoral, and illegal. As Quakers, we seek a world at peace and believe that the use of torture by the US has opened the US to international condemnation and increased the likelihood of war. US policy on torture must be consistent with our nation's best laws and values, and any use of torture should be condemned by all our citizens and state governments. Asheville Friends Meeting supports the faithful work of the non-profit organization, NC CIT. in addressing the role of NC in covert acts of detention and torture following the attacks on 9/11. NC is important in extradition to black sites where torture is performed.

The 3rd agenda item is another proclamation. P & E believes that we should do more than pass a minute supporting the work of the NCCIT so we're asking Meeting to approve a Proclamation of support for the NCCIT to be signed by the City Council and the Buncombe County Commissioners. We would also like to get media coverage of this work. The Proclamation would be similar to one issued by the City of Durham (see attachment 2). A Friend asked that we also address torture in prisons and as a result of poverty and racism. The result of the work of Amnesty International has brought to our attention the dire situations in our world regarding the use of torture. The committee struggled with how to limit its minute when there are examples, such as the one from the city of Durham, which demonstrate a fuller understanding of the problem. The research shows that while the acts of torture date from Vietnam era and Bush administration post 9/11/01, that torture is continuing on many levels. The scope of the problem is vast. A report will be generated in 2018 by the NCCIT.

The meeting was not ready to approve a minute condemning the use of torture and supporting the work of NCCIT. We ask the Peace and Earth Committee to continue to work on a full minute to be considered in October.

The 4th agenda item is a request that Meeting revise its policy on charging half price for the use of our Meeting House for events sponsored by a Meeting committee such as P & E or other committees. We believe that such events are continuing the work of the Meeting and should not be charged at all to use the Meeting House.

Minute 2: Friends approve changing our rental policy to allow meeting committee-sponsored events to occur without charge for the use of the meetinghouse.

Racial Justice Committee - Steve Livingston

I want to bring to your attention that Racial Justice Committee recommends that the Meeting approve a Minute endorsing the Millions for Prisoners' Human Rights March [rally] taking

place on Aug 19 in Washington DC, here in Asheville, and around the US. We are specifically wanting to add our Meeting's name to the list of regional organizations and faith communities co-sponsoring the local gathering at Pack Square. We would like to read the organization's public statement into the record of the business meeting. Not asking for money nor any sort of word smithing nor a minute of our own. I also want to mention that Max Parthas, our associate from SC who presented the documentary "13th" at the Dr. Wesley Grant Center earlier this year, is third-top billing guest speaker at the DC rally. We are extremely pleased for Max - and for the rally organizers! Friends are asked to please attend the rally in Asheville which begins at 11 a.m. at the Pack Square Park.

Following is the statement:

A) We DEMAND the 13th amendment ENSLAVEMENT CLAUSE of the United States Constitution be amended to abolish LEGALIZED slavery in America.

B) We DEMAND a Congressional hearing on the 13th Amendment ENSLAVEMENT CLAUSE being recognized as in violation of international law, the general principles of human rights and its direct links to:

1. Private entities exploiting prison labor
2. Companies overcharging prisoners for goods and services
3. Private entities contracted by states/federal government to build and operate prisons. This would also include immigration detentions
4. Racial disparities in America's prison population and sentencing
5. Policing: the disproportionate (unaccountable) killings by police in the black and brown communities
6. Felony Disenfranchisement laws
7. Immigration and Customs Enforcement 34,000 detention quotas
8. Producing the world largest prison population

Minute 3: Friends approved the statement that calls for the removal of the exception clause of the 13th amendment of the United States Constitution to abolish legalized slavery in the United States. Our meeting will be listed as a faith group that supports this change at the rally in Asheville on Saturday, August 19th.

We closed with a moment of silent worship to meet again as way opens on Tenth Month 8, 2017.

Attachments:

International Day of Peace Proclamation

WHEREAS, the ideal of peace embraces the deepest hopes of all people, and remains humanity's guiding inspiration; and

WHEREAS, in 1981 the United Nations proclaimed the International Day of Peace be "devoted to commemorating and strengthening the ideals of peace both within and among all nations and peoples;" and

WHEREAS, the United Nations expanded the observance of the International Day of Peace in 2001 to include the call for a day of global ceasefire and non-violence, and invited all nations and people to honor a cessation of hostilities for the duration of the Day; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting and proper to support the observance of the International Day of Peace, which affirms a vision of our hearts and our world at peace and fosters cooperation between individuals, organizations, and nations; and

WHEREAS, global crises compel all citizens to work toward converting humanity's noblest aspirations for world peace into a practical reality for future generations; and

WHEREAS, in (Buncombe County) (Asheville) (Western North Carolina) the following groups and organizations work to promote peace and justice in our world and in our communities:

(list of groups and organizations)

NOW, THEREFORE, I, (Esther E. Manheimer, Mayor of the City of Asheville)
(Brownie Newman, Buncombe County Commission Chair)
(Susan Fisher, NC State Representative of the 11th District, and
[other delegates from WNC])

do hereby proclaim September 21, 2017 as International Day of Peace in the (City of Asheville, NC), (Buncombe County, NC) (Western North Carolina), and call upon the people of (Asheville) (Buncombe County) (Western North Carolina) to observe this day in our community as we imagine, build, cultivate, expect, advocate and celebrate peace on earth.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF,

I have here unto set my hand and caused the Seal of the (City of Asheville) (County of Buncombe), North Carolina, (Western North Carolina) to be affixed this 21st day of September 2017.

(Signature)

Proclamation

Human Rights and Bill of Rights Day

WHEREAS, the City of Durham is home to a diverse population, including students, working people, and retirees, citizens and non-citizens, and is committed to the human and civil rights of all of its residents as guaranteed by the Bill of Rights; and

WHEREAS, on October 20, 2003, the City of Durham adopted both the Bill of Rights Defense Resolution and the Resolution Supporting the Rights of Persons Regardless of Immigration Status; and

WHEREAS, torture is a blatant violation of human and civil rights, violating legal, faith, and ethical traditions, the U.S. Constitution, and international treaties such as the Convention against Torture, to which the U.S. is a signatory; and

WHEREAS, the non-governmental North Carolina Commission of Inquiry on Torture is now being established to examine the role of some North Carolinians in the United States' secret, global torture program, launched soon after 9/11/2001; and

WHEREAS, according to the Senate Intelligence Committee's report on CIA torture, some North Carolinians played a significant role in the torture program through the operations of Aero Contractors, an aviation front company established by the CIA in 1979 at the Johnston County Airport in Smithfield which, after 9/11/2001, undertook a leading role in transporting detainees to secret detention and torture; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. government, the state of North Carolina, and political subdivisions of this state have failed to acknowledge or repair the harms created by the secret detention and torture program, even though impunity compounds those harms and allows their repetition; and

WHEREAS, when governments fail to act, citizens have both a duty and an opportunity to do so, and citizen-led inquiries have a long and honorable history, in North Carolina and beyond, of exposing human rights abuses and creating momentum for accountability and redress.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, William V. "Bill" Bell, Mayor of the City of Durham, North Carolina, do hereby proclaim that the Durham City Council declares itself in support of the North Carolina Commission of Inquiry on Torture (NCCIT), a 501(c)(3), non-profit organization described at www.nccit.org, created to address the issue of North Carolina's role in secret detention and torture and to craft a model of accountability that can inspire similar efforts elsewhere.

Witness my hand and the corporate seal of the City of Durham, North Carolina, this 19th day of December 2016.



William V. "Bill" Bell
Mayor