

11th Month
Meeting for Business

Asheville Friends Meeting
Eleventh Month 11, 2018

Present: Robin Wells, Clerk, Pat Campbell, Recording Clerk. Edith Patrick, Katherine Kowal, Pat Johnson, Steve Livingston, Kitti Reynolds, Satchel Loftis, Annika Peacock, Michael Peacock, Barbara Esther, Bob Lackey, Jim Barham, Margaret Normile, Gail Hipkins, Jim Hipkins, Patti Hughes, Rylin Hansen, Gita Larson, Wanda Guokas, Sarah Jane Thomas, Beth Eddy

Meeting began with a period of silent worship from which clerk, Robin Wells, read the following:

I want to bring into the room, the spirit of our Meeting retreat. A common thread at the retreat was a strong feeling of connection with each other. As we were led to share deeply, there emerged a longing for even better connection among us--during our time at Meeting and during the time between first days. In the months to come, I hope we will explore how best to do this. For now, let's take a moment to sit in the Light that connects us all.

The Meeting accepted the agenda.

Minute #1: Friends approved the 10th month minutes of the Meeting for Business

Announcements

1. Our Meeting's first day school is exploring the Quaker testimonies this year. The month of October was dedicated to the peace testimony and the month of November is based on the integrity testimony. The hope is that the whole Meeting can also do this work with the Queries.
2. We have had an email exchange with Sharon S. She is requesting mediation. Ministry and Counsel is working on this.
3. Since the Recording Clerk will be out of town when the next Meeting for Business occurs, Kitty Reynolds, agreed to function as the Recording Clerk that day.
4. The Clerk announced an issue of concern regarding an email sent by someone in Asheville Friends Meeting to an adult leader in the SAYF Program regarding their use of materials and decision-making process. The Clerk expressed her concern about this email and indicated that an email/letter will be sent to the SAYF leader indicating the Meeting trusts the group's decision making process, supports their work and welcomes the return of group.

Treasurer's Report – Satchel Loftis, our treasurer, explained the various funds the Meeting has and stated that his report will cover the Operating Fund. At this time the Meeting is \$10,000 behind what was brought in by this time last year, but since historically, much of the anticipated income comes in the last two months of the year, he is not yet worried. If this money does come in, as anticipated, there will be no problems.

Satchel reviewed for the Business Meeting the various line items of the budget. When questioned, explained was the large unspent fund of the Racial Justice Committee and their lack of control of when they can spend the training money. He also said that most of our budget is spent on some form of outreach. He reiterated that increased income will be needed over 11th and 12th months to make budget. He plans to close out the 2018 budget year by mid-January and asks that expenses for reimbursement be submitted to him by mid-December.

Satchel indicated that the \$6000 in the Meeting House Improvement Fund is available for the needed replacement of stairs.

All of the Meeting House Retreat expenses are not available at this time given the Retreat was only a week ago.

Finance Committee Report – Committees were reminded that budget requests should be submitted by 11th Month 30.

Request for Membership - Robin Wells reported that Annika Peacock has requested membership in the Religious Society of Friends through Asheville Friends Meeting. Her letter to the Clerk requesting membership was read to the Meeting for Business; a Clearness Committee will be formed.

The Clerk explained that the function of the Clearness Committee was to ask questions and help the applicant discern whether she/he is clear to join. Ministry and Counsel Committee then makes a presentation and recommendation at a future Meeting for Business. The decision will then be held over for a month.

Long-Range Planning Committee - Patti Hughes reviewed the minute regarding the Long Range Planning Committee that was held over from last month.

Friends approved the following minute:

Minute 2: The Long-Range Planning and Visioning committee is to be a standing committee of the meeting. This committee would keep in mind an overall ethic of sustainability with the purpose of creating a holistic long-view plan to help the Meeting make thoughtful, Spirit-led decisions. The work of the committee would create a connection between all aspects of meeting life. It would offer an ongoing overview of the Meeting's progress according to a plan created by members of the committee and presented to Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business. Each of the standing

committees would be offered a place on the committee. There may also be some at-large members.

Nominating Committee - Kitti Reynolds

Nominating committee asks Friends for approval of Pat Campbell for Recording Clerk and to accept her request to step down from the Finance Committee

Minute #3: The Meeting for Business approved Pat Campbell as the Recording Clerk and accepted her stepping down from the Finance Committee.

Retreat Committee - Katherine Kowal

The AFM retreat at Montreat Conference Center was a great success. Twenty adults and three children attended all or part of the weekend. We cooked together, washed dishes together, sang together, worshiped together, and hiked together. The operative word here is "together." We laughed a lot and sometimes cried. We talked about the people whose love and faith in us had made a difference and where we had made a difference in the lives of others. We explored the meaning of community and what gifts we each had to bring to our AFM community. At our closing worship nearly everyone expressed gratitude for this experience as well as gratitude and renewed appreciation for the value of our Quaker community.

On the financial side we collected \$2,305. We spent \$2625.

We overspent by \$323. However, we had \$428 in the Retreat account from previous years so we still have a balance in that account for "seed money" for the next retreat.

Minute #4 The Meeting minuted its appreciation to the Retreat Planning Committee for their hard work on a very successful retreat.

Library Committee - Pat Campbell

The library has finished purging (with minor exceptions) old, outdated or inappropriate books from the library and beginning to rearrange and catalogue the remaining collection. We are planning and prioritizing the next steps that need attention and have submitted to the finance committee the Library Committee's request for next year's budget. We are also considering working on a policy regarding donations.

Ad-Hoc Planning Committee for the Spring SAYMA Representative Meeting in Asheville on 3/16/19 - Robin Wells said that AFM, in hosting this event, will need a planning committee for hospitality and food. Steve Livingston, Kitty Reynolds, Pat Campbell, and 2 (undetermined) members of the Hospitality Committee will be on this Committee. Steve Livingston volunteered to be the Clerk. This Committee will need to be active by 1st Month. Friends were asked to think about whether they might host someone for one or two nights.

SAYMA Queries - Edie Patrick

On tenth month 21, 2018, during the second hour, perhaps eight or nine of us went through the proposed queries for the new SAYMA Faith & Practice. Most of the suggested changes were made at that session; one person emailed suggestions. Any changes proposed by our meeting must be approved at our business meeting. Only approved changes will be sent on to the SAYMA query committee.

Today these suggestions will be looked at and tentatively approved as we are able, although final approval by the Business Meeting will occur by 1st Month 2019 Business Meeting.

The revised Query suggestions will be attached at the end of this document.

Duties of the Clerk for the AFM Manual - Patti Hughes again presented the draft of the Meeting Clerk's duties, which had been held over from the previous Meeting for Business.

DUTIES OF THE CLERK (DRAFT)

First let us define what the clerk is NOT. The clerk is not a spiritual leader. The clerk is not a pastor. The clerk is not a therapist for the meeting.

1. The primary duty of the clerk is to ensure that the business of the meeting is conducted “after the manner of Friends.” Normally, the clerk will preside over all regular meetings for worship with attention to business, called meetings, and threshing sessions although he/she may delegate another person to do so.
 - a) The clerk sets the agenda for the meeting.
 - b) The clerk ensures a free and open discussion of the matter at hand by calling on individuals to maintain order.
 - c) The clerk ensures that the discussion is carried out in a spirit of worship
 - d) The clerk tests the sense of the Meeting by suggesting wording of a minute.
 - e) The clerk may offer “test sentences” to see if members are in unity around the sentences.
 - f) In the case further action is required , the clerk appoints someone to carry out the action
 - g) The clerk is normally concerned with process rather than outcome of the discussion. In those rare instances when the clerk is led to speak out of concern for an outcome, someone else will be appointed to clerk the discussion and the clerk will become a participant for the duration of the discussion.
2. When the Meeting for Business has agreed on a certain action, the clerk acts as “the voice of the meeting” in sharing this stand with other parties.

3. The clerk represents Asheville Friends Meeting at public gatherings of faith communities or appoints someone.
4. The clerk is an ex-officio member of all committees and may attend their meetings. The Clerk is a member of Ministry and Counsel and of the Board of Directors of Asheville Friends Meeting.
5. The clerk supports those in positions of responsibility and committees carrying out their task.
6. The clerk writes minutes for traveling and sojourning Friends as well as letters of transfer of membership as requested.

This section was held over until the next Business Meeting so more Friends could review them.

We closed with a moment of silence to meet again as way opens in twelfth month, 2018.

Asheville Friends Meeting, at its 11th Month Meeting for Business, reviewed the proposed changes in the Queries, striking out language we recommend for deletion and highlighting in yellow the approved changes we recommend for inclusion to the SAYMA Committee working on the Queries.

SAYMA Committee to Revise the Guide to Our Faith and Practice

Revised Queries (Draft B)

As of the end of September 22, 2018

“Queries are understood to have three distinct values: the personal value, as we find the answers in ourselves; the interpretive value, by which the progressive application of our religious principles to life is disclosed; and the corporate value, by which the state or the Society can be appraised. At the reading of them, let us search our own hearts in the Light of the Holy Spirit and carefully ponder these questions for our personal answer.”

Faith and Practice, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (1935)

“Quakers use queries for personal reflection, self-examination, or spirited discussion.

American Friends Service Committee “An Introduction to Quaker Testimonies (2011)

A: Queries for Monthly and Yearly Meetings:

1. * In our Meeting for Worship, in what ways are both silent and vocal ministry rooted in *a shared experience of the Light? During meeting for worship, do we search for guidance from the Light? Do we begin silent worship and stay centered despite distractions?*
2. * *How can I build community through my thoughts and actions regarding being on time to Meeting for Worship?*
3. *How does our meeting remain in a spirit of worship when conducting business? How can we in Meeting for Business open ourselves to differing views, search for a sense of the meeting, and be guided toward resolution in the Light?
4. *How can we each use our individual gifts in the work of maintaining our meeting? In what ways can we honor the wide range of contributions from individual Friends to the meeting? How do we help Friends recognize their own gifts?
5. *How do we build community through monthly and yearly meetings for fellowship, service,

and learning? ~~Are peace and unity maintained among us?~~ **How do we** ~~address discord and conflict~~ **seek peace and unity in our meeting? How do we address discord and conflict in our Meeting.** (approved 11/11/2018)

6. Are we sensitive to the spiritual and physical needs of those making up the meeting community? How do we lovingly respond to the needs of homebound, distant, or lonely members and attenders?

7.* How are members and attenders and their meetings using clearness committees as a way of gaining clarity in personal and corporate matters?

8. *How does our meeting provide for continuing religious education in the manner of *Friends*?

9. *Do we individually assume our rightful share of responsibility for the work and the financial support of the monthly meeting?* How does the meeting support and provide resources for those with special needs?

10. *How does our meeting support those who are struggling with addiction? In what ways does our meeting address the systemic causes of those addictions?

11. (Added to number A. 4)

12. (Added to number A. 1)

13. *Am I open to insights from other Friends in the meeting? Do I seek guidance from meeting members and others who share Friends' beliefs?

14. *How do we use technology to enhance, detract, or distract from the spiritual life of the meeting?

15. * How can I speak so that Friends can better hear messages? How can the Meeting improve the meeting?

16. * How do we show that we value older Friends among us?

17. How do we support Friends who require extra care? How do we support those giving the extra care?

18. How does the meeting use the Meeting for Threshing?

19. What is ~~your~~ our understanding of eldering? ~~Do Friends elder to encourage others to share their gifts as well as to provide guidance?~~ How do **we as** Friends provide guidance and encourage others to share their gifts ~~by eldering?~~ Do **we you** test **our your** leading to elder with other members of the meeting? (approved 11/11/2018)

20. *How do we individually identify and reach out to absent and present Friends whom we find difficult, unlikeable, or challenging? ~~Does our whole meeting take responsibility for the vulnerable in our community instead of solely relying on our care and nurture committee?~~

How do we, individually and collectively, support the work of our care and nurture committee of our Meeting community? (approved 11/11/2018)

21. How do we interact with those who have been hurt by the meeting community? ~~Do we contact Friends who have left the meeting in painful circumstances in order to offer support and the learn from their experience?~~ **How do we support and learn from those Friends who**

have left the meeting in painful circumstances ~~and learn from their experience?~~ (approved 11/11/2018)

22. *How does our meeting attract new members? When new people attend how does our

meeting help them feel welcome? How does our meeting respond when members stop attending meeting?

B: Queries for Personal Discernment

1. How do I minimize distracting others during Meeting for Worship? How can I minimize my reaction to distractions during Meeting?
2. * Do I hold in the Light the responsibility to share my views even though I perceive I may be a minority of one? ~~Can I stand aside to allow the meeting to go forward even though I am not in full agreement?~~ How do I discern when to stand in the way and when to stand aside?
(approved 11/11/2018)
3. * How have my unspoken assumptions about individuals or groups of people caused them pain? How has this awareness changed my behavior?
4. * What yearly meeting or monthly meeting responsibilities are mine to do?
5. * When I see Friends engage in actions or words which seem inconsistent with the testimonies of the Religious Society of Friends, how do I season my reaction to be sure it does not come from lack of understanding or unrecognized prejudice? How do I respond?
6. * What are some of the distractions that keep me from the right ordering of my life?
7. * ~~Do I take part in activities that are restorative?~~ What *restorative* activities do I ~~take part~~ **participate in** that are restorative? How do I develop my physical, emotional and intellectual abilities? ~~Do I care for my body as a gift from the Spirit?~~ How do I care for my body as a gift from the Spirit? **[Although some work was done on this, it was decided to hold this over until the next meeting]**

8. *How is fun a part of my life?

9. * How does my expression of sexuality reflect love and respect?

10. *How do we make use of the Bible, the writings of Friends, and other inspirational literature? Are we open to new Light from wherever it may come? Do we seek to understand and appreciate those of other faiths?

11. * ~~Do I make time daily for meditation, prayer, or worship? Do I seek spiritual guidance in making decisions, especially in difficult times?~~ What is my daily practice of meditation, prayer, or worship? What spiritual guidance do I seek in making decisions, especially in difficult times? (approved 11/11/2018)

12. * Have I/we collectively sought to understand the discomfort that often accompanies the perception of feeling “other?” What informs my understanding of the discomfort that often accompanies the perception of feeling "other"? (changes were not approved)

13. * What does it mean to me to look for that of God in every person?

14. How has continuing revelation informed my spiritual journey?

C: ~~Queries for Testimonies~~ Queries Based on the Testimonies

(approved 11/11/2018)

1. * How do we distinguish between needs and wants? How do we decide how much is enough?

2. * How do I/we address conflict? How am I led to work toward unity and harmony in my personal life and in my meeting? What kind of risks are we willing to take to resolve conflict?

3. * How does the way I live my life help eliminate the causes for all wars?
4. * How do I practice Friends' testimony against military preparations and all participation in war?
5. * ~~Do all aspects of my life bear the same witness?~~ How do I center my life in the awareness of the presence of God or Spirit so that all things take their rightful place? **How might I address those aspects of my life that do not bear the same witness?**

(approved 11/11/2018)

6. * Do I attempt to tell the truth at all times? Under what circumstances is it difficult for me to tell the truth? **How do I assess discern when it is better not to tell the truth? How do I assess when it is better not to say anything?** ~~(change not approved)~~

7. * Am I honest in all areas of my life? How do I discern right action when the truth is unclear?

8. * How do I bring nonviolent practices to all my relationships? Where there is hatred, division, and conflict, do I seek to be an agent of reconciliation?

9. * Do I treat others with respect? How do I treat people I perceive as different, i.e. "other"? **How do I show respect for all people, especially those I perceive as different, i.e., "other"?** ~~(change not approved)~~

10. * How do I address inequality in all forms? What am I doing to bring about equal opportunities for those who suffer discrimination?

11. * How do I recognize and celebrate the diversity that exists in my meeting?

12. * Do I search for that of God within all persons regardless of their differences?

13. * Do I consider Friends' beliefs and testimonies in my life choices? What are my priorities with respect to how I use my time and treasure?

The discussion of the Queries stopped before considering #14, to be resumed at the 12th Month Meeting for Business.

14. * How do my Quaker values inform my choice of work? How do I conduct my business and financial affairs so they are consistent with Friends' testimonies?

Comment: Are we adding the "S" for Stewardship to our testimonies? I don't see any queries related to stewardship in the care of the earth. the queries that are here look good.

D: Queries for Families

1. * How do I grow in love and understanding with my children and with all other young people? In what ways am I an example for them? Do I seek out and learn from their insights and concerns? How do I seek out and learn from their insights and concerns?

2. * How do I make the presence of the Light felt in my home?

3. * How does my family use Quaker process to build community and grow in the Spirit? How does my family address difficult topics in a way that encourages honest and respectful communication?

4. * How do I as a parent prepare my children to be responsible in an ever-changing world?

5. * How do I recognize marriage as a loving and sacred relationship requiring mutual consideration and continuing adjustments?

6. * How do I practice the art of listening in my family, even beyond words? How do I show

respect and understanding for everyone? How do I plan activities that will **include** all members of my family?

7. *How do I balance the need for privacy and intimacy in my family life with my desire to make my home a center of hospitality?

E: * Queries for Living in the Wider Community:

1. * How does the meeting offer young people opportunities for fellowship and service? In what ways do I help them assume responsibilities in the home, the meeting, and the larger community?

2. * Deleted query about Schools after considering Columbia's minute.

3. * Why is addiction so pervasive in our culture? How do our laws affect issues of addiction?

4. **How does your meeting participate in the wider community while maintaining its integrity?**

How does your meeting maintain its integrity as it participates in the wider community?

5. *In what ways does your understanding of current issues inform your participation in the wider community?

6. ***Do I affirm my commitment to influencing governmental actions through informed witness**

and/or considered resistance? **How do I affirm my commitment to influencing governmental**

actions through informed witness and/or considered resistance?

7. *In what ways do I discern that my actions result from leadings of the Spirit?

8. ***When Friends are led to participate in civil disobedience, are they encouraged by *their***

meeting to seek clearness about their action? **When Friends are led to participate in civil**

disobedience, how does our **meeting encourage them to seek clearness about their action?** *Does*

the meeting then decide whether or not to support that action?

9. * *Am I alert to the subtle as well as obvious injustices which may exist in my social and economic life?* How can I alert myself to the subtle as well as obvious injustices which may exist in my social and economic life?

10. * How do I support fair and equitable use of resources?

(Does this query belong with earthcare?)

11. * How can I seek to further understand and remove systemic causes of misery and suffering? How do I offer refuge and support to those who are oppressed and/or ostracized and yet seek that of God in their oppressor? (It is suggested to put a comma after "ostracized.")

12. * In what ways do I and my meeting support young people faced with the possibility of being recruited for military service?

13. * How does being known as a Friend help me on my spiritual journey?

14. * How does awareness of the living conditions of people in my local and global communities affect my purchasing choices? In turn, how do these choices affect the well-being of others?

15. How can Quakers model right use of electronic devices so that their personal lives and the life of Meeting are enhanced? How can we model right use of electronic devices so that both our personal lives and the life of the meeting are enhanced?

16. * Do electronic devices contribute to or interfere with my relationships with others and with my participation in the face to face activities of my community? How do electronic devices contribute to or interfere with my relationships with others and with my participation in the face to face activities of my community?

Add a new query: How do I and my meeting interface with other cultural/racial groups in my community and in the wider world?

Section F: Queries for Care of the Earth

1. How do I express my gratitude for Creation?
2. How do I honor all living things, including myself? Do I seek God in the entire world?
3. How mindful am I that actions for peace and justice are interwoven with the right sharing of Earth's resources? How much is enough?
4. How do we hold in the Light the impact of climate change on the "least of these" –the vulnerable members of the human, animal and plant communities?
5. As we integrate care for the Earth into our lives, how can we seek ways to share with our Meeting and others the values of ecological concerns?

It was suggested to add a new query to Care of the Earth:

6. How do I seek to reduce my use of fossil fuels? How does my meeting seek to reduce its use of fossil fuels?

Section G: Queries for Young Friends (This is the committee's reworked version. It is being looked over by SAYF. Note that it has not been edited yet.)

1. How can we create peace in an **often** hostile world?
2. How do you stand firmly against inequality? How do you peacefully challenge [problematic social norms] discriminatory social institutional practices?
3. How do you create and nurture community?
4. How do you practice good social work while nurturing your well-being? What avenues

exist between those?

5. What do you do that harms/affects the Environment? How can you lessen your impact?
6. In what ways do you use your voices and express your opinions? *When do you reevaluate your perspective? (SAYF: Please consider changing “opinions” to “views” as the original word “perspectives” can include facts and not just “opinions”)
7. How can we be supportive of each other’s identity and growth?
8. (Moved to be the 2nd sentence in number 6.)
9. How do you remain grounded in a materialistic society?
10. How do you reconcile simplicity and self-expression?
11. How do you apply Quaker values to your social media presence?
12. How does your energy change as you enter adulthood?
13. What is the Light? Where do you find that in your life?
14. How do you identify as Quaker, and how do you explain that to your peers?
15. To whom do you extend your compassion?

We want to be sure the Young Friends are intentionally choosing their pronouns. Only 2 of the 15 queries use the first person. More than one in the Asheville discussion preferred "I/we" to "you." One said that the use of "you" is loaded with separation, the "other."

Section H:* Queries for a Preparative Monthly Meeting

1. * Does the meeting have an understanding of Quaker history and practice? How does this understanding contribute to the life the meeting?
2. Does the meeting study Friends’ literature and SAYMA’s Guide to our Faith and Practice?

3. Is the meeting able to carry out usual organizational functions such as appointing a clerk, maintaining a treasury, and recording business meetings? Does the meeting seek and listen to Spirit-led guidance in making decisions?
4. * Are there enough Friends and/or regular attenders to support a monthly meeting? If two or three of these were to stop attending, what would happen to the meeting? Is there ongoing outreach for new attenders?
5. How does the meeting face its challenges, seeking assistance from Spirit, the sponsoring meeting, and yearly meeting?
6. How does the meeting have programs of religious education for all ages?
7. How does the meeting build community other than in Meeting for Worship?
8. * How does the meeting encourage visitors and regular attenders to increase their involvement with Friends?
9. Does the meeting interact with Wider Quaker Organizations (Friends General Conference, American Friends Service Committee, Friends Committee on National Legislation, Quaker Earthcare Witness, etc.) through conferences and other means? Does the meeting support the yearly meeting through financial contributions and attendance at yearly and representatives' meetings?
10. Does the meeting follow Friends' practice of service through faithfulness to the Spirit?
11. Is the preparative meeting receiving adequate spiritual and practical support from the sponsoring meeting.

