

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

Asheville Friends Meeting

9th Month 8, 2019

(DRAFT)

Present: Robin Wells, Clerk; Pat Campbell, Recording Clerk. Barbara Esther, Rylin Hansen, Steve Livingston, Rusty Maynard, Bobby Carter, Kitti Reynolds, Suzanne Junkins Friedrichs, Patti Hughes, Pat Johnson, Beth Eddy, Mike Eddy, Gita Larson, Katherine Kowal, Edie Patrick, Margaret Normile, NancyLynn Sharpless

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

What is the nature of our shared experience of the Divine and how do we nurture our collective spiritual growth and transformation? In what ways do we support each other in our spiritual journeys, in our search for God's will and in our efforts to increase understanding of humanity's relationship to life on earth?

The agenda was reviewed and Meeting accepted the agenda.

Minute #1: Friends approved the 8th month minutes with the following corrections:

- **The spelling of Adrienne Weir's name will be corrected in Minute #4 and her full name will be used.**
- **It was noted that the Meeting's release of Paul Hibschman's membership should have been minuted instead of announced. This will be done in this 9th month Business Meeting.**

Announcements

The first of the three Long-Range Planning and Visioning worship sharings will be held on 10-6-19 at the rise of Meeting. We encourage everyone to attend as we begin to develop our shared vision for Asheville Friends Meeting. This vision will inform the long-range planning of our meeting.

Today begins the new First Day School year. We are excited to report the beginning of a youth group (6th grade through High School) that will be led by Ian Canary-King and Leslee Johnson. We thank them for stepping up to lead this group.

SAYMA's Representative Meeting will be held in West Knoxville Friends Meeting next week. Michael Peacock will be representing our meeting and Barbara Esther will be clerking the Rep Meeting. Steve Livingston will be there working with the Yearly Meeting Planning Committee. We thank them for their service and will hold them in the Light as they do this important work. (NOTE: We learned after Business Meeting that Laura Lane will also be attending Rep Meeting to help plan Junior Yearly Meeting next year.)

The House and Grounds Committee will have a Meeting work day on 11th Month, 2 starting at 9am. Work will be done inside and outside the Meetinghouse. The Hospitality Committee will be providing refreshments.

Membership

Last month we announced that Paul Hibschan requested that his membership with Asheville Friends Meeting be terminated. We failed to minute the Meeting's acceptance and will do so now.

Minute #2: Friends accepted Paul Hibschan's request that his membership with Asheville Friends Meeting be terminated.

Meeting Finances

It was reported last month that our meeting's financial reserves are getting low. We have been using them to finance some important updates to our meetinghouse. It has come to our attention that these reserves are no longer being replenished on a regular basis, as they used to be. We began a conversation about how we will take responsibility for the upkeep of our meetinghouse so that it will serve future generations and the community at large. This will help us make important decisions when we create next year's budget.

In the future, financial information regarding the various funds will be reported routinely at Meeting for Business. We have had a series of important structural improvements. These improvements have been let go for some time. The House and Grounds Committee is closer to asking the Fire Marshall for a reevaluation of our legal capacity which is 49. There are also some expenses we know are coming up and have to be paid for (e.g., the furnace for the 1st floor). There are also other expenses for important needs (e.g., window replacement). We need to be more responsible for the house and our finances

Pat Johnson, clerk of the Finance Committee, reported on aspects of the budget to help with the discussion. The General Fund equals the Operating Fund from which the usual budgeted operating and committee expenses are drawn. There are ten restricted funds which carry over from year to year: Building Fund; Meetinghouse Improvement Fund; House and Ground Emergency Fund; Ministry and Council Needs (including a Sufferings Fund); Bequest and Memorial Fund; Residential Retreats Fund; Scholarship Fund; College Support Fund; Religious Education Fund, Racial Justice Fund. The General Fund collects interest.

We need to look at how to sustain the housing and building funds. One Friend thought that setting the budget based on the previous year's income was very misguided; that we needed a much higher standard. Another thought that we needed to see a bigger picture, a 30-year graphic style history of what was in the funds and what was spent. Another thought that monetary goals for each of the three House and Grounds Funds needed to be set, attained and when spent, replenished in order to be able to keep the Meetinghouse. One Friend mentioned that the beginnings of the Building Fund(s) started after the Meeting finished paying off the mortgage. A Friend felt that it was OK for the reserves to go down. We can raise them up when needed. Another stated that our budget reflects our values and asked about whether money was available to people in need and what the restrictions are. One friend on Ministry and Council indicated that there was such a fund and it was handled through the M and C. In most cases, checks were not made out to the individual but to the entity that the person needed help with (e.g., rent, utilities). The question was raised about creating a fund outside of our budget for helping individuals.

The Finance Committee will gather information regarding the amounts of and use of the Building and Meetinghouse Improvement Funds over a twenty to thirty-year period.

Committee Reports

Nominating Committee- Kitti Reynolds

Bob Lackey was nominated to the Ministry and Council Committee.

Minute #3: Bob Lackey's nomination to the Ministry and Council Committee was approved with enthusiasm.

Communications- Steve Livingston

Communications Committee met on 9/1/2019, Julia Dorn, Mike Eddy, Nikolai Wise, and Steve Livingston (clerk) were present.

Acknowledging universally positive feedback we have received regarding the weekly email news digest, we will continue to publish in its current form.

Recognizing there are Friends among us who have misgivings and privacy concerns about our online presence, we are developing a release form so that every person in our community will be represented or identified only to the extent with which they are comfortable.

Understanding that some Friends are not at all familiar with social networking, and others may have limited knowledge or misconceptions, we will present a second-hour forum on Oct 20 on social networking: strategies, pitfalls, and etiquette. The Communications Committee is holding off on posting anything on our website or Facebook page that refers to individuals or groups of Friends in the Meeting until after the forum, once we have an approved release form signed by any and all individuals concerned. We will begin working on the release form immediately.

Peace and Earth-Mike Eddy

The Committee presented the following draft letter to the editor that they would like to submit to some local papers. They would like it to be from Asheville Friends Meeting and not just the Peace and Earth Committee.

This fall an important film, "The Report," will be released in theaters and on Amazon. *The Report* is the US Senate Committee Study of the Central Intelligence Agency's Detention and Interrogation Program. The movie stars Adam Driver as Daniel Jones, Annette Bening as Dianne Feinstein, Jon Hamm as Denis McDonough.

The plot follows Staffer Daniel J. Jones and the Senate Intelligence Committee as they investigate accusations of torture by the CIA following the September 11 attacks. In the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, CIA agents begin using extreme interrogation tactics on those they think were behind it. The movie had its world premiere at the Sundance Film Festival on January 26, 2019. It is scheduled to be theatrically released in the United States on November 15, 2019, before being released on Prime Video two weeks later on November 29.

Why allow torture if it is against US moral values? Why continue to torture if proven ineffective? Why cover up the torture program if education would prevent future such programs? We urge Americans to watch *The Report* movie and wrestle with these important questions.

Why should we in North Carolina be sure to watch? Because the CIA flights took off from North Carolina. Because the airline that owned the planes was based in North Carolina. Because the airline is still doing business in North Carolina serving "... an unmet market need for dependable and discreet airlift." <http://www.aero-ltd.biz>

Less than 10% of the Senate Report has been released to the public. The full report was only released to 7 people, and the US Senator from North Carolina, Richard Burr, wants to collect all those copies. If Senator Burr has his way, no one will ever know what actually happened.

See the movie and learn for yourself what "The Report" is about.

Peace and Earth Committee, Asheville Meeting
of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

After some lengthy but vibrant discussion regarding the release of the report to the public and of Quaker values, the letter was referred back to the Committee for further work. There was agreement that such a letter is important. It was agreed that Senator Burr's name should be removed. One person suggested that we condense the information about Burr to say: Certain interests want all the copies to remain undisclosed. There was agreement about adding the line: Will the public ever know what actually happened?

The Meeting wants to express gratitude for Mike's consistent and faithful concern with this issue.

We closed with a period of silent worship to meet again as way opens in 10th month, 2019.