

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
Asheville Friends Meeting
12th Month 8, 2019

Present: Robin Wells, Clerk; Kitti Reynolds, Recording Clerk. Bobby Carter, Patti Hughes, Bob Lackey, Beth Eddy, Katherine Kowal, Bob Smith, Gita Larson, Rusty Maynard, Jim Cavener, Scotty Utz, Barbara Esther, Edie Patrick, Pat Johnson, Mike Eddy, Satchel Loftis, Morgan Murray, Jim Barham

Business Meeting opened with silent worship out of which the Clerk spoke about her evolving prayer discipline. She prays for individuals every morning and occasionally in the middle of the night. She often uses words, but sometimes her prayers are without words. With this in mind, she shared with us the following excerpt from Howard Brinton's *Guide to Quaker Practice*:

Prayer, as it becomes freed from words and thoughts, imperceptibly passes over from our outreach toward God to God's answer to us. The restless, fragmentary human will finds itself centered in a deeper, wider Will in which it is fulfilled and at peace. The soul is filled with the sense of Divine Presence. All is suffused with Light and Power. Awareness of self fades out and only God remains.

Friends were reminded of Friends' practice during Business Meeting:

- Wait to be called upon and address the Clerk, unless you are giving a report and then address the meeting.
- Speak from personal perspective using "I" instead of "you."
- Keep spoken messages short and to the point and be prepared for the Clerk to interrupt if your message continues for too long. We want to be sure all are heard.
- Spend more time listening than speaking.
- Be gentle with each other when disagreements come up.

The agenda was reviewed and Meeting accepted the agenda.

Minute #1: Friends approved the 11th month minutes with the following corrections: Loftis is spelled with an "i" (under budget discussion). Take out "Pat Johnson" in the same sentence and replace with "was." In the paragraph that begins "Satchel indicated..." insert "in Vietnam" after "well."

Announcements

Our third worship sharing facilitated by the Long-Range Planning and Visioning Committee will be on the 5th day of the first month in 2020. It will focus on how we want to be present in the wider community (e.g., service, activism, being visible to seekers, etc).

Thank you to Rylin and Bobby for representing Asheville Friends Meeting in the Interfaith Thanksgiving Celebration held on November 17th at Congregation Beth Israel. The gathering was very well attended with people overflowing into the entrance and fellowship hall. Rylin spoke shortly, led everyone in a moment of silence, and led everyone in singing Simple Gifts.

The Meeting's holiday meal will be shared on the 15th day of this month. We will sing carols, watch a production put on by the children in Meeting, and share a potluck meal.

Beth Eddy and Pat Campbell are organizing a new season of Friendly Eights groups. These groups are a fun way to get to know Friends outside of Meeting. Be sure to sign up with Beth and Pat if you would like to participate in one of these groups. They will begin in the new year.

Secret Pals will begin early in the New Year. This is a great multigenerational event that builds cross-generational relationships and is looked forward to by many in Meeting. Information cards will be available right after Christmas.

There are more copies of *White Fragility* available – you can take a copy and mark it up. We will begin discussing it in the New Year. You can get ready by reading the first two chapters.

2019 Budget Discussion and 2020 Budget Proposal--Satchel Loftis

[2019 general fund activity and draft budget for 2020](#)

We have been discussing the upcoming budget for a few months and the need for renewing our investment in the upkeep of the Meetinghouse. Last month, Business Meeting approved the establishment of a Meetinghouse Improvement Transfer Fund that will appear in our operating budget and transfer to the Meetinghouse

Improvement Fund. Meeting approved an amount of \$2,600 to be budgeted for this use.

Satchel presented the 2019 Operating Activity as of 12/7/19 and the 2020 Proposed Budget. He noted that our dividends are down because there is less money in the fund to earn interest. Money was spent this year on important meetinghouse renovations. Based on amounts contributed at the end of last year, we hope to get another \$4,100 in gifts during the last month of this year. If not, there may be a significant shortfall in our budget. When end-of-year contributions for 2019 are recorded, the final 2020 budget will be discussed in 1st month 2020. Since we base our budget totals on contribution amounts given the year before, this will give us the target budget total for 2020.

Nominating Committee didn't use their \$50 this year. A zero amount will be kept in the 2020 budget in case it is needed as a place-holder. We also suggested putting a \$0 for the Scholarship Committee under Meeting Support. This committee does not have any expenses other than the Scholarship Fund it manages (\$200/year) which is financed by a fund transfer noted elsewhere in the budget.

Committee Reports_

Peace and Earth Report--Steve Livingston

Jesse Fripp expressed thanks to those who contributed to the Appalachian Leadership Scholarship Fund he set up at Warren Wilson College.

Minute 2: Meeting approved spending \$500 from the Alice Brown Fund to be sent to Appalachian Leadership Scholarship Fund at Warren Wilson College from Asheville Friends Meeting.

House and Grounds report – Jim Barham

Our meetinghouse cleaning person, Laura Wall, is raising her rates to \$20.00/hour. If the Meeting wants to keep Laura's services, it will need to meet this request. Laura cleans 5-6 hrs/month. It was noted that Laura does

an excellent job and this is a very good rate for cleaning help. This would be around \$1,200/yr but only \$1,100 is currently in the budget for 2020. We will need to make an adjustment in the budget.

(Some Friends suggested perhaps we should increase the pay for our child-care provider as well, since we agreed to pay everyone who works for us the same amount. Child care is about 8 hr/month. We will need to discuss child care payments later, after input from Religious Education.)

Minute 3: Meeting approved increasing Laura Wall's payment to \$20/hr, starting in January. This would increase House and Grounds line item to \$ 3,300.00.

SAYMA Request

A SAYMA email recently received by our Clerk asked for prayerful discussion about tensions that have arisen within meetings having to do with financial requests from SAYMA URJ committee (SURJ). The Clerk read the committee's goals so we could all be familiar with the work of this committee. We sat in silent worship. Then the Clerk asked that we speak tenderly and respectfully and do more listening than talking. The Clerk asked how we can best support the SURJ committee so it successfully meets its goals? We want the leaders of SAYMA to feel supported as well.

The committee's goals presented by SURJ and approved by SAYMA:

1. Help navigate Quaker culture and process;
2. Provide opportunities to connect with other FOC in order to build a community of support; share experiences and resources; and receive emotional, strategic, and tactical support;
3. Work to resolve the expressed concerns of FOC in a timely manner;
4. Engage in culturally-relevant conflict resolution processes that honor SAYMA's commitment to uplifting racial justice;
5. Hire skilled facilitators to help FOC understand and heal from generational racial trauma and develop personal and group empowerment;
6. Arrange ongoing workshops and other opportunities for learning that focus on dismantling racism for all SAYMA Friends beginning with the Yearly Meeting leadership (including all SAYMA and Monthly Meeting clerks; the Finance Committee; the Planning Committee; Ministry and Nurture Committee; Junior Yearly Meeting; SAYF; and YAFs).

A thoughtful discussion took place, largely in support of SAYMA URJ. One friend noted that Hank Fay posted some helpful information about the organization being funded through SURJ.

We will come back to this in January, with recommendations from our RJC. The SAYMA website has minutes from their business meetings and people are encouraged to read the minutes that are connected with this issue.

We closed with a period of silent worship to meet again as way opens in 1st month, 2020.

