

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

Asheville Friends Meeting

1st Month 12, 2020

Present: Robin Wells, Clerk; Beth Eddy, Recording Clerk. Bobby Carter, Mike Eddy, Steve Livingston, Rylin Hansen, Pat Campbell, Katherine Kowal, Jim Cavener, Kitti Reynolds, Satchel Loftis, Gita Larson, Barbara Esther, Adrienne Weir, Morgan Murray, Pat Johnson

Meeting opened with silent worship. The Clerk read the following query:

Are we truly open to new people and new ideas or do we require new things to fit into the model we have always known?

The agenda was reviewed and Meeting accepted the agenda.

Minute #1 Friends approved the 12th month minutes with the following correction: Removal of Peace and Earth meeting minutes, except for the paragraph about the Appalachian Leadership Scholarship Fund. It will be kept in the minute to explain approved spending in minute #2.

Announcements

This is the last day to sign up for Secret Pals. We are looking for an equal number of children and adults. Participants will be notified about their pals next week and gift-giving begins on the 26th day of this month. Participants will give a total of four gifts with the last gift given during our secret-pal reveal party.

Our Racial Justice Committee will be leading a discussion of the book, *White Fragility* in the coming months. On January 19th at the rise of meeting, the discussion will begin with the introduction and focus on the first two chapters of the book. Books are available at no cost for people to keep and mark-up with personal notes. Please consider joining us for this important discussion. (if you are reading this book the first time, the Committee suggests you stop after the second chapter until we have the first discussion.)

The SAYMA Yearly Meeting planners are seeking workshop leaders for the upcoming annual retreat and sessions. The workshops will be held on June 12 and 13th, 2020. For more information, see the announcement in the Digest.

The next SAYMA representative meeting will be held in Atlanta on March 14th. Participants can register online using the SAYMA website. The deadline for registration is February 22nd.

House and Grounds announces that our new furnace will be installed this week. Thank you to the committee for their help with our furnace.

End-of-Year Report for 2019 and 2020 Budget Proposal--Satchel Loftis (see attached)

Satchel has some good news for us. We want to thank everyone who stepped up to help us meet our financial obligations in 2019. Satchel reported that we received 8% more in contributions in 2019. Our rental income was up and all committees were frugal in expenditures leaving us \$855.85 under budget.

Satchel walked us through the preliminary 2019 Operating Activity results report column by column. It was noted that the new line item for Meetinghouse Improvement Transfer Fund (approved in 12th month 2019 for \$2600) was missing. It is included in the attached updated report. He led a discussion clarifying our restricted funds and the process to transfer funds between the different line items. He will make modifications to the report to reflect changes to assist our understanding.

Agreement was reached to:

- 1) match contributions and rental income for 2020 to 2019 results.
- 2) transfer 2019 surplus into unrestricted funds and use it to fund the Meetinghouse Improvement budget of \$2600.
- 3) include reach values for 2020 budget.

It was noted that the Long Range Planning Committee is responsible for developing plans to help Meeting meet upcoming financial needs such as major house improvements.

Satchel updated the 2019 Operating Activity (preliminary) and resubmitted the following report (**see attachment**).

Preliminary review of 2020 budget will be finalized in the 2nd month 2020 meeting for business.

Committee Reports

Nominating Committee-Kitti Reynolds

Two nominations are being presented this month. The first is for Recording Clerk. Pat Campbell has stepped down from this position and we thank her for her service. Beth Eddy has agreed to step in as Recording Clerk.

Minute #2: The meeting approved Beth Eddy's nomination to be our new Recording Clerk

Our other nomination is for SAYMA Representative. Michael Peacock has stepped down from this position and we thank him for his service. Morgan Murray has agreed to be our SAYMA Representative and will attend the upcoming representative meeting in Atlanta on March 14th.

Minute #3: The meeting approved Morgan Murray to be our meeting's, SAYMA Representative.

Supporting the SAYMA Uplifting Racial Justice (URJ) Committee--Robin Wells

Before beginning our discussion, as clerk reminded Friends:

- Wait to be called upon and address the Clerk
- Keep spoken messages short and to the point
- Spend time listening
- Speak from personal perspective using 'I' instead of 'you.'

We continued the discussion that we started last month. We were asked by SAYMA Ministry and Nurture to familiarize ourselves with the current situation with the SAYMA URJ Committee. Last month we spoke about the tensions building in SAYMA surrounding the diminishing membership of the URJ committee and the committee's unexpected expenditures. We are seeing a polarization building within SAYMA that is disheartening to us. How can we be supportive of the URJ committee and of our SAYMA leadership, so this polarization doesn't keep SAYMA from moving forward with the important work of the URJ Committee? Can we think out of the box and make some suggestions that could help diffuse the situation?

To provide some background for Asheville Friends, here is some information about the URJ Committee:

The original URJ goals presented at a SAYMA business meeting:

1. Help navigate Quaker culture and process;
2. Provide opportunities to connect with other Friends of Color (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 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).]

In 2017, the committee was allocated \$16,000 for a set-aside fund. This fund was approved with the expectation that the fund would be administered the same as other SAYMA set-aside funds and the clerk of the URJ Committee would approve expenditures. In addition, another fund was created to accept earmarked donations for the use of the committee. This additional fund originally contained approximately \$4,000. In June of 2018, URJ announced that it would provide anti-racism training at Rep Meetings. This training would be provided by the People's Institute. The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond (PISAB), is a national and international collective of anti-racist, multicultural community organizers and educators dedicated to building an effective movement for social transformation. (NOTE: It was also recommended that monthly meetings conduct and fund their own anti-racism training using People's Institute.)

In 9th month, 2019 URJ reported the following activity:

1. SAYMA-URJ is now formally affiliated with the Friends Center for Racial Justice and will be collaborating on a number of projects in the future. URJ reimbursed Angela Hopkins's travel costs to SAYMA 2019.

2. The Paul Cuffee Friends of Color Worship Group was established in Sumter, SC for people of color who wish to worship in the manner of Friends if/when they are uncomfortable doing so in SAYMA's mostly-white Quaker meetings.
3. URJ has partnered with The Abolitionist Center in Sumter, SC. SAYMA-URJ and the Abolitionist Center share space and this is where the Paul Cuffee Worship Group meets for worship. SAYMA has financially supported the Abolitionist Center work.
4. URJ granted \$1,000 to Asheville Black Lives Matter to support its community work.
5. URJ granted its clerk \$1,000 in financial aid to cover the costs associated with moving to the Abolitionist Center and for repairs to her living and work space.

The committee is requesting an additional \$10,000 (above the \$16,000) for fiscal year 2020. This request came in after the SAYMA 2020 budget was approved at the annual sessions. URJ has requested that all of their funds be given to them upfront for them to keep in their own bank account and used as needed. In addition, the committee requests that special donations from individuals and monthly meetings be put into a **Racial Justice Fund** to help bridge the racial wealth gap and provide economic justice.

The clerk presented a simple draft statement for us to consider in our response to what has been asked of us. It is just a starting point for us to think about. We do not need to send this anywhere, unless we feel led to. This is just for us at this point.

The meeting settled into silent worship and out of the silence, the clerk read a statement for us to consider. We then settled back into silence and continued with our discussions.

Asheville Friends Meeting believes that SAYMA is united in the desire for the Uplifting Racial Justice Committee (URJ) to be successful. SAYMA approved funding for this committee and left the direction for committee spending in the hands of the clerk. Can we

follow through with our commitment, as long as expenditures are legal for a religious organization?

We recognize the need for an additional Racial Justice Fund to help pay for some of the start-up costs of the committee leadership. Can SAYMA maintain a special fund that would go toward start-up and living expenses? Ongoing individual and monthly-meeting donations which are earmarked for the Racial Justice Fund can go toward these expenses and the original committee funding can be focused on the committee goals.

This was followed by meaningful discussion. Some of the ideas suggested:

There is a lot of fear and anger and Friends were asked to hold fear and anger in the light.

It is important to give the group a chance and let them tell us what they need and for us to get out of the way.

We do recognize need for start-up costs.

Concerns were expressed that we need to be sure all expenses are legal for a non profit religious organization.

It was suggested that a separate fund could be set up for some of the expenses. (Berea Friends have set up a GoFundMe for the Abolitionist Center to help the start-up cost).

Concerns centered around ensuring that SAYMA not split as a result of concerns about these expenses and activities.

Let go of the urgency to hold onto things.

We need to take more time to understand each other.

We need to sort out tensions between the individual and the Meeting.

A friend suggested that we at Asheville Friends Meeting need a meeting focused on deep listening and healing.

We closed with a period of silent worship to meet again as way opens in 2nd month, 2020.

Asheville Friends Meeting
2019 Operating Activity (PRELIMINARY) and 2020 Proposed Budget

	2019 Actual (Preliminary)	2019 Budget	Actual / Budget	Over/(Under) Budget	2020 Budget (Proposed)	% of Total Budget
Operating Activity						
Income						
Unrestricted Contribution Income	25,306.93	23,469.15	108%	1,837.78	25,250.00	85%
Rental Income	1,480.00	1,200.00	123%	280.00	1,500.00	5%
Total Interest Income	609.06	760.00		(150.94)	310.00	1%
Total Income before Transfers	27,395.99	25,429.15	108%	1,966.84	27,060.00	91%
Transfer FROM General Fund**	-	855.85		(855.85)	2,600.00	
Transfer FROM Racial Justice Funds**	925.00	925.00		-	-	
Total Transfers FROM Other Funds**	925.00	1,780.85	52%	(855.85)	2,600.00	9%
Total Income & Transfers FROM Other Funds	\$ 28,320.99	\$ 27,210.00	104%	\$ 1,110.99	\$ 29,660.00	
Expense						
Transfers TO Other Funds**						
Meetinghouse Improvement Transfer**	-	-		-	2,600.00	
College-Age Support Transfer**	-	17.00		(17.00)	17.00	
M&C Needs Fund Transfer**	688.00	688.00		-	688.00	
Scholarship Fund Transfer**	200.00	200.00		-	200.00	
Total Transfers TO Other Funds**	888.00	905.00		(17.00)	3,505.00	12%
Meeting House						
Total House and Grounds	1,991.59	3,365.00	59%	(1,373.41)	3,300.00	11%
Insurance	3,781.00	3,900.00	97%	(119.00)	3,750.00	13%
Total Utilities	1,972.73	2,000.00	99%	(27.27)	1,850.00	6%
Total Meeting House	7,745.32	9,265.00	84%	(1,519.68)	8,900.00	30%
Meeting Support						
Care and Nurture Committee	-	200.00	0%	(200.00)	200.00	
Communications Committee	-	135.00	0%	(135.00)	125.00	
Total Finance Committee	815.65	575.00	142%	240.65	505.00	2%
Hospitality Committee	373.02	80.00	466%	293.02	500.00	2%
Library Committee	-	250.00	0%	(250.00)	100.00	
Ministry and Counsel Ctte	-	50.00	0%	(50.00)	50.00	
Total Peace and Earth Ctte	92.62	100.00	93%	(7.38)	100.00	
Total Racial Justice Committee	1,037.69	1,425.00	73%	(387.31)	500.00	2%
Total Religious Education Ctte	1,775.39	2,400.00	74%	(624.61)	2,500.00	8%
Spiritual Enrichment Ctte	59.50	100.00	60%	(40.50)	100.00	
Total Meeting Support	4,153.87	5,365.00	77%	(1,161.13)	4,680.00	16%
Outreach						
General Outreach	2,700.00	2,700.00	100%	-	3,000.00	
Racial Justice Outreach	2,602.85	2,700.00	96%	(97.15)	3,000.00	
Quaker Outreach	2,700.00	2,700.00	100%	-	3,000.00	
SAYMA Dues	3,575.00	3,575.00	100%	-	3,575.00	
Total Outreach	11,577.85	11,675.00	99%	(97.15)	12,575.00	42%
Total Expenses & Transfers TO Other Funds	\$ 24,365.04	\$ 27,210.00	90%	\$ (2,844.96)	\$ 29,660.00	
Net Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	\$ 3,955.95	\$ -		\$ 3,955.95	\$ -	