

**Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
Asheville Friends Meeting
2nd Month 14, 2021**

Present: Bob Lackey, Clerk; Beth Eddy, Recording Clerk

Present via Zoom: Morgan Murray, Mike Eddy, Margaret Normile, Patricia Johnson, Gita Larson, Sarah Thomas, Patti Hughes, Pat Campbell, Margaret Farmer, James Barham, Rylin Hansen, Robin Wells, Barbara Esther, Jim Cavener, Jane Fernandez, Kitti Reynolds, Ellie Cox, Patty Burgess, Barbara Burke, Satchel Loftis, Steve Livingston, Jim Barton, Hannah Burgess, Bobby Carter.

Meeting opened with Silent Worship.

The Clerk shared a reading out of the silence. From Ben Lomond Quaker Center Archives. Caroline Stephen, Light Arising Thoughts on the Central Radiance W. Heffer & Sons 1908.

No clear impressions, either from above or from without, can be received by a mind turbid with excitement and agitated by a crowd of distractions.
The stillness needed for the clear shining of light within is incompatible with hurry.
~ Caroline Stephen, 1834-1909

Minute #1: Friends Approved 1st month business meeting minutes with one correction changing the word accepted to approved in the first minute report.

Announcements:

Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association [SAYMA] Planning Committee through prayerful consideration and consultation with Friends from many monthly Meetings have discerned to hold the 2021 yearly meeting sessions primarily virtually. This decision addresses both the deep apprehension felt by many Friends about meeting in person as well as the uplifted hopefulness that we might still join together in some way this summer after setting aside our annual gathering in 2020. We anticipate the business portion of the yearly meeting sessions will be conducted over 3 days from June 11-13, 2021 while workshops and plenary sessions as well as programming for young Friends will be less confined to the traditional Thursday-Sunday schedule.

The SAYMA Yearly Meeting Planning Committee (YMPC) is meeting regularly to organize the 2021 sessions. We continue to consider details for events, including workshops, worship opportunities, plenaries and the possibility for small groups to join Yearly Meeting in a hybrid fashion. We welcome input from the larger community as we work. Please contact Jennifer Dickie, YMPC Clerk at YMPC@SAYMA.org

SAYMA Remembrances:

SAYMA's Ministry and Nurture Committee invites Friends to gather Friday, February 19, 7:30-9pm EST, via Zoom in Meeting for Remembrance of those who have died, since we were last together at Yearly Meeting June 2019.

All are welcomed to share memorial minutes, reflections and prayers.

If you are unable or do not wish to attend, minutes can be sent to Robyn Josephs forrestwife@yahoo.com or SAYMA Office saymaoffice@gmail.com by February 17.

Please share this information widely within your meetings and communities, and reach out to those who you know might want to attend.

Zoom information and link will follow.

Questions? Robyn Josephs forrestwife@yahoo.com or 828-707-4018

Entire Meeting Event:

The young Friends invite the entire Meeting to participate in:
Moving to Make a Difference!

On Saturday February 20th, we invite you all to walk, run, bike, scooter, stroller, or skate your way to the Meetinghouse, arriving between 2:00-3:30 p.m. Bring a mask and a mug, because a few folks will be ready with Hot Chocolate or tea! We're not just gathering to see each other (though that will be nice), we also want to make a difference.

We are collecting non-perishable food and raising money to help fulfill the wants and needs of our neighbors. All the food will be delivered to Little Free Food pantries in the area. All the money raised will be donated to Beloved Asheville to support their ministry. You can choose to just bring food or money yourself, or get sponsors from friends and family members.

Please feel free to join even if you are unable to participate in the movement part. And please remember to help keep everyone safe by keeping ample distance when removing your mask to enjoy your hot drink.

Rain date— Saturday February 27th, same time and place!

Committee Reports:

SAYMA Assessment Report: Barbara Esther, Recorder

Report for the 2020 Census for Asheville Friends Meeting
It was a challenge this year to figure out the number of active members and attenders due to the fact that we did not worship together face-to-face for most of the year. Thanks to those who were good zoom attendees the list was compiled, noting seven people who have been inactive this year, and adding seven or eight to the list of active members and attenders. I thank Robin Wells for her assistance in putting together an accurate count.

One of the purposes for doing an annual census is to determine our obligation to the yearly meeting (Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association, SAYMA) for the assessment we pay each year. The assessments are the main source of revenue for the yearly meeting to pay our two part time employees, to run the youth program, and to allow committees to have a small budget for programs and expenses. The annual

retreat and business sessions are generally paid for by registration fees Friends pay when they attend. The yearly meeting approved an assessment of \$75.00 per active member and attender of monthly meetings. We counted 37 adult members who remain active in the meeting and 30 active attenders. There are also 24 children under the age of 18 in our meeting, but no assessment is paid for them.

In short, **our meeting is asked to pay 67 times \$75. That equals \$5,025.**

Finance Committee: Pat Campbell, Satchel Loftis
2020-01-01 through 2020-01-01 (final)

Attachment contains the final of the 2020 finances (first column, second column is the 2020 budget). The third column contains the version of the first proposed 2021 budget as created at the 1/10/21 business meeting; the final 2 columns contain separate versions of the budget for discussion.
(Note it does not contain the current SAYMA assessment.)

Satchel reported that AFM had received a donation of \$1000.00 at the end of December and that money had gone to outreach in the final 2020 budget. The final report includes reimbursements for books, zoom fees and all of the RJC outreach.

Minute #2: Meeting Approved the 2020 Final Budget as presented.

The last two column in the attachment show the 2021 Budget with an adjustment via a pro-rata spread of the additional contribution across the entire budget (version A) vs only across the outreach portion (version B). Satchel pointed out that Rental income was totally removed from the 2021 budget income, as we have not opened the meetinghouse to people since march 2020. Pat Johnson is responsible for handling meeting house rentals which was stopped in 2020 due to the covid pandemic. There was much discussion over expecting and including the last minute contribution as a given in the 2021 income. A friend pointed out that in 2020 we only paid

\$3575 in SAYMA assessments. It appears we had underpaid and used old census numbers for our assessment. In 2021 our assessment is \$5025 and needs to be included in the 2021 budget. This assessment can be paid in installments during the year (preferred by SAYMA), or all at once. It became evident to all that we would be way over budget as discussed in the first month 2021 business meeting. Discernment and discussion followed around the following: Income: we can not predict income but we can track the actual income and report monthly; the one time gift of \$1000 can *not* be counted on. SAYMA assessment: other meetings have held their assessments in escrow, but all have paid their assessments. It appears that AFM made a mistake in our assessment contribution to SAYMA in 2020. We need to do right in our 2021 budget. It was noted that the assessment is actually part of our meetings support and should be reported in that line item. It was agreed that we split our SAYMA assessment into quarterly payments.

There was much discussion on the Shortfall in the proposed 2021 budget. Do we take money out of our reserve funds to cover our assessment? A Friend pointed out that the reserve funds were set up to cover major emergency expenses such as furnace repair/replacement. Do we take funds from the committees? Or trim our outreach? A friend pointed out that we at our own homes pay our bills first than use what is left over to donate. Another friend expressed concern over going into our reserve funds to cover our shortfall. Satchel pointed out that if we want a balanced budget, we need to take the deficit of \$2300 out of some area(s). We can look at a possible prorate reduction to committee expenses or to out-reach to cover the shortfall.

No agreement was reached on the 2021 budget. Discernment will be continued at next business meeting on the budget. The 2nd month business meeting draft minutes will include the finance committee's report and will be available for review and study in the AFM Digest on 2/17/21 prior to the 3rd month business meeting.

Thanks and much appreciation were given to Satchel Loftis and Pat Campbell for their work and efforts on the finance committee.

Ministry and Counsel: Bob Lackey

First draft State of the Meeting document was read by Bob (see attachment)

The following Changes were noted: The reference to the Cherokee land ownership should read Cherokee stewardship as they do not believe in owning the land just caring for it. The reference to harm done to the Cherokee should include the harm done to all indigenous people.

Much thanks and appreciation were given to Bob and all who contributed the state of the meeting report, it was an outstanding job, well done.

Communications Committee: Mike Eddy, Bob Lackey

Follow up on AFM website

Mike reviewed the problems with the old website which had been hacked and some malware redirected viewers to bad sites plus the website was not secure especially for donations. He has rewritten the website and has it up for review. He asked all to check out the new site and send him information on problems. He currently has it on the cloud in the free tier. He is watching the costs and so far it is not costing us anything. Once the Meeting approves the new site, we can disassociate from Skyrunner and save their expenses. It can be reached by going to <http://ashevillefriends.org> The old website will automatically redirect to the new site.

Expense for transcript: Satchel reported that Morgan has been reimbursed for closed captioning on zoom.

Peace and Earth: Pat Johnson

P & E recommends for your consideration an invitation for AFM to co-sponsor 2 UNCA events related to Indigenous Peoples. Sponsored by the Literature Department, the events are Kirstin Squint, Native American Studies Scholar on March 24 and Annette Saunooke Clapsaddle, author of *Even As We Breathe* on March 31.

Ms. Clapsaddle is a member of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians & teaches HS in Swain County where the Qualla Boundary is located. Part of her reason for writing this novel is to give her students a story they can relate to. She has been asked to do virtual readings all over the country – at bookstores in New York and other places that, normally, a first time author would not have the budget to visit. Since her novel came out, Clapsaddle's been doing at least three virtual events a week. Her book, she adds, is already in its second printing. Here's a link if you want more info on the

book: www.npr.org/2020/11/22/931451076/even-as-we-breathe-a-first-novel-from-a-teacher-who-writes-for-her-students

We have previously co-sponsored Indigenous Speakers and P & E would like to continue this support.

Indigenous speaker events coming up at UNCA in March.

- March 24: Kirstin Squint, Native American Studies Scholar
- March 31: Annette Saunooke Clapsaddle, author of Even As We Breathe

Pat reported that in the past we had helped to support speakers at UNCA and had raised \$1500 from individual contributions which was used to set up a foundation to continue support of the series.

Pat asked us to contribute to cosponsoring these 2 events by sending in contributions to AFM and noting on the 'for' line of the check that it is for the speaker series at UNCA.

Minute #3: Meeting approved the support for the UNCA speakers in March 2021 using the individual contributions specifically designated for this purpose.

SAYMA: Bob Lackey

Bob led us in a discussion to determine if we still agree with the World Quaker Organizations allocations for our budget. He pointed out that SAYMA's Wider Quaker Organizations (WQO) Allocations Committee was created because the Finance Committee had come to think that, while it was responsible for budgeting some amount for WQO funding, it was inappropriate for it, rather than Friends gathered in YM, to say how these funds should be allocated to individual WQOs. Our committee is charged with applying YM approved criteria to prepare a proposal for such allocations and present it to Spring RM and, after seasoning and consideration of recommended changes, to YM in the summer.

We are now preparing to formulate a proposal for budget year 2022 and are seeking to involve SAYMA MMs (and their worship groups) from the

beginning of our deliberations. Specifically, we would like to know what Friends think about how the WQOs on our list (see below) seem to rate with regard to the following three of our decision criteria:

1. How important is this organization in serving as the (public) face of Quakers?
2. How are the YM and members of MMs involved in the organizations work? I (Bob) am quite involved with lobbying with FCNL on Iran, repeal of laws after 9/11 that all the president to go to war without congressional approval.
3. What is the degree to which the work of the organization fits within a social issue important to SAYMA?

We also want to be sure you know that YM has approved a procedure for adding and removing organizations to/from our list. An MM can send the WQO Allocations Committee a minute stating the action it would like to see and the reasons for it. After investigation and further seasoning with your meeting the Allocations Committee brings the concern to YM for decision.

The Committee must have its proposal ready before mid-March so it would be a great help to have your responses by mid-February or as soon as may be after your February business meeting. You will also have an opportunity for more input before YM in response to the draft proposal we present to Spring RM. (Among such inputs might be a recommendation to the Finance Committee for an increase in the WQO budget.)

From SAYMA's Allocations Committee

Wider Quaker Organizations (Excluding Membership Bodies) Supported by SAYMA

1. American Friends Service Committee
2. Bolivian Quaker Education Fund
3. Friends Committee on National Legislation
4. Friends Peace Teams
5. Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans and Queer Concerns
6. Friends Journal
7. Quaker Earthcare Witness
8. Quaker House
9. Quaker Voluntary Service
10. Right Sharing of World Resources

All these organizations have websites that can provide you with information and insights.

Questions for AFM:

A - What Quaker organizations do members/ attendees personally support?

B - What organizations are they currently working with on projects and awareness.

In response to the first question, Bob took a survey of attendees as to how many supported personally the various WQO supported by SAYMA

Results from the 17 present:

1. American Friends Service Committee	6
2. Bolivian Quaker Education Fund	1
3. Friends Committee on National Legislation	7
4. Friends Peace Teams	2
5. Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans and Queer Concerns	2
6. Friends Journal	7
7. Quaker Earthcare Witness	1
8. Quaker House	3
9. Quaker Voluntary Service	1
10. Right Sharing of World Resources	4

The meeting closed with silent worship until the way opens for our next business meeting in the 3rd month of 2021.

Attachments:

Financial report 2020/2021

AFM state of the meeting report

Asheville Friends Meeting
2020 Operating Activity 2021 Budget (Proposed)

	2020 Actual	2020 Budget	1st Month Version	2nd Month Ver. A	2nd Month Ver. B
Operating Activity					
Income					
Contribution Income - Unrestricted	24,018.85	25,250.00	23,800	23,800	23,800
Rental Income	780.00	1,500.00	-	-	-
Interest Income - Unrestricted	136.69	310.00	135	135	135
Total Income before Transfers	24,935.54	27,060.00	23,935	23,935	23,935
Transfer FROM General Fund** (\$2,600)	2,600.00	2,600.00			
Total Income & Transfers from Other Funds	\$ 27,535.54	\$ 29,660.00	\$ 22,935	\$ 23,935	\$ 23,935
Expense					
Transfers TO Other Funds**					
Meetinghouse Improvement Transfer**	2,600.00	2,600.00	1,916	2,028	1,916
College-Age Support Transfer**	-	17.00	17	17	17
M&C Needs Fund Transfer**	688.00	688.00	507	537	507
Scholarship Fund Transfer**	200.00	200.00	147	156	147
Total Transfers TO Other Funds**	3,488.00	3,505.00	\$ 2,587	\$ 2,738	\$ 2,587
	13%				
Meeting House					
Total House and Grounds	2,510.44	3,300.00	2,432	2,574	2,432
Insurance	3,781.00	3,750.00	3,800	3,800	3,800
Total Utilities	1,655.65	1,850.00	1,800	1,800	1,800
Total Meeting House	7,947.09	8,900.00	\$ 8,032	\$ 8,174	\$ 8,032
	29%				

** These items are transfers to/from other funds, not cash out/in.

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Asheville Friends Meeting
2020 Operating Activity 2021 Budget (Proposed)

	2020 Actual	2020 Budget	1st Month Version	2nd Month Ver. A	2nd Month Ver. B
Meeting Support					
Care and Nuture Committee	-	200.00	147	156	147
Communications Committee (website)	120.00	125.00	92	98	92
Total Finance Committee	441.12	505.00	338	344	338
Hospitality Committee	-	500.00	184	195	184
Library Committee	-	100.00	-	-	-
Ministry and Counsel Ctte	-	50.00	37	39	37
Peace and Earth Ctte	-	100.00	-	-	-
Total Racial Justice Committee	1,735.00	500.00	368	390	368
Religious Education Ctte					
Childcare	1,790.00	1,500.00	1,537	1,629	1,537
First Day School	-	500.00	295	312	295
Total Religious Education Ctte	1,790.00	2,500.00	1,832	1,941	1,832
Spiritual Enrichment Ctte	-	100.00	50	50	50
Total Meeting Support	4,086.12	4,680.00	\$ 3,049	\$ 3,213	\$ 3,049
15%					
Outreach					
General Outreach	3,000.00	3,000.00	2,211	2,340	2,544
Racial Justice Outreach	2,439.33	3,000.00	2,211	2,340	2,544
Quaker Outreach	3,000.00	3,000.00	2,211	2,340	2,544
SAYMA Dues	3,575.00	3,575.00	2,634	2,789	2,634
Total Outreach	12,014.33	12,575.00	\$ 9,267	\$ 9,809	\$ 10,266
44%					
Total Expenses & Transfers TO Other Funds	\$ 27,535.54	\$ 29,660.00	\$ 22,934	\$ 23,934	\$ 23,934
Net Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1	\$ 1	\$ 1

State of the Meeting 2020

Asheville Friends Meeting

DRAFT

The year 2020 was a year of unforeseen challenges that would test our meeting throughout the year. The pandemic, the endless misinformation, the economic downturn, the killing of George Floyd, the endless election cycle, just to name a few. In our shock and grief we have struggled individually and as a Meeting to fashion an appropriate and Spirit-informed response to these stresses. Our Meeting members and attenders have supported one another and responded to these many challenges with appropriate seriousness and caution. As we look back on 2020, we are grateful for the efforts of so many Friends that have helped bring our Meeting and our community through this most difficult year.

Sensing the enormity of the toll that the approaching pandemic was going to take on the world, for many of us this became a more prayerful time. One of the first efforts we took was to encourage folks to join together at 7pm daily and hold healthcare and other essential workers in the Light for 10 minutes each day. Being cautious and in light of what we were learning about best practices toward the pandemic, we stopped meeting in person in March. Thanks to the dedication of the tech-savvy members of Meeting, we began holding weekly meeting for worship and monthly business meetings on Zoom. Our Ministry and Counsel Committee began the process of maintaining connection by using our directory to create email and phone lists. This gave us the tools we needed to keep in touch with folks regularly. By dividing the phone list up and finding volunteers to make calls regularly we strengthened our individual connections. Members sent cards and visited folks, masked and at safe distance, who were most isolated or having health concerns. On a handful of joyous occasions when the weather was nice, we met for socially-distanced and masked worship on the lawn.

Several in Meeting provided needed transportation for groceries and medical appointments. Boxes of food were delivered to several isolated individuals and families. Families sent cards and visited folks who were most isolated or having some health concerns. It was shared in the Digest for publication the name of a mourning group which was bringing people together to share their grief around losses due to COVID. Inspired by a desire of Asheville Friends to do something for the community, a fundraiser was planned and carried out with great success.

The proceeds went to local organizations working with homelessness and food insecurity.

The COVID pandemic has caused some unanticipated consequences to the environment, some of them positive. The decrease in air travel has lowered carbon emissions. Once we realized that we could not meet at the meeting house, our House and Grounds committee did what they could to shut it down; setting the thermostat at 55 degrees and turning off the refrigerator. Several folks in Meeting made cloth masks to help with supply, but which also reduced our use of disposable masks. Individuals in Meeting concerned with the abundance of take-out containers being used, have approached local restaurants. They have been encouraging the use of compostable containers rather than plastic and styrofoam that cannot be recycled.

Inspired by the work of our Racial Justice Committee we are building on the work begun in the past with the book Becoming An Anti-Racist Church, by reading and discussing through the year Robin DiAngelo's White Fragility and Resmaa Menaken's My Grandmother's Hands, an amazing work on racialized trauma. These readings and discussions helped us to grow our understanding of systemic racism, the language of white supremacist culture and ways of mending within ourselves, our meeting and the community around us. Having a safe place to share deeply and emotionally, practice language and make mistakes has opened us up to a deeper level of connection. Participation in these discussions has increased through the year. Over time more and more individuals in our meeting are finding ways to work in the community at large toward a more racially equitable culture. While we were horrified by the very visible murder of George Floyd, we realized that this is one of so many unjust deaths in our society. We have chosen to prioritize contracting needed work with businesses owned by People of Color. We began talking about reparations and other actions that we can undertake by supporting on-going work in our Black and Brown communities.

We are working on a notice with a Cherokee professor at UNCA concerning acknowledging who held the original ownership of the property on which our meeting house stands. We provided a sign that is placed in front of our building which states "We are on Cherokee Land." We have learned more this year about the history of Quaker boarding schools and their cruel methods of making Native American children give up their culture and native language and learn English. Two UNC-A instructors gave a second-hour presentation on Cherokee land theft and history of NC boarding schools for indigenous children. We acknowledge the great harm that has been done to the Cherokee people. Unfortunately it continues today as we see the COVID incidence of indigenous peoples during the pandemic.

The quality of the virtual Meeting for Business has been maintained, allowing lengthy discussion which allowed all who wanted to share to give their opinion. Our attendance for business meetings has been almost as well attended as before quarantine. In some cases committees have met via conference call to accommodate individual needs. Committees have cooperated, allowing outreach to be maintained. Our one week fundraiser made it possible to contribute \$6600 to the homeless and food insecure. The weekly email digest has helped folks to be aware of business being conducted. We feel it is important to continue paying the workers in our Meeting, whether or not they are working during the pandemic. We have supported organizations that are helping the homeless and food insecure, many of them people of color, who are residing in our community. We also organized a food collection to go to MANNA food bank which is distributed to people with food insecurity.

We were grateful for the caution and leadership of many of our leaders, especially our governor. At the same time, the toll that the pandemic was taking on the emotional health of our children was on the minds of many in our meeting. Our Religious Education committee set up and hosted weekly First Day. All of the children were invited each week to a virtual check- in on First Days, allowing children to stay in touch with each other. Individual families did outside visits with each other. This became a real joy for many of us. They also arranged a socially-distanced picnic at the meeting house on one of the first days that we met on the lawn for worship.

Maintaining traditions has proven to be important, perhaps especially for our youth. We were able to continue our annual Simple Christmas and Secret Pal Programs by making up and delivering kits to those wanting to participate and scheduling Zoom meeting time to work together on the projects. We were also able to have our Nativity Play on Zoom. We enjoyed singing together during this mostly with us all on mute. In this way we were able to continue providing the long-lasting connection between the adults and children in Meeting that has developed over the years. As the holidays approached the younger families put together stockings and packages for those in Meeting who would be alone at this special time. They were delivered with some carols while at a safe distance.

Our members have lost parents, other family members and friends due to COVID. We have been cautious. Our Meeting for Worship has been virtual since March but has about 20 attendees who meet weekly. Friendships have been maintained and the depth of our friendships has been revealed. With time on our hands relationships have been developed and maintained, but some opportunities have

been missed. Some of us have felt overwhelmed to varying degrees. Through understanding, caring and kindness we have grown stronger. We have learned some ways to work through some of our differences and challenges. Our worship has grown deeper as we have come together to help each other through this very scary and trying time.