

Called Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
Asheville Friends Meeting
Eleventh Month 19, 2023

Present in the Meetinghouse: Pat Johnson, Clerk, Barbara Burke, Recording Clerk, Barbara Esther, Kitti Reynolds, Margaret Normile, Sandra Parker , Ellie Cox, Robin Wells, Suzanne Junkin-Friedrichs, Steve Livingston, Katherine Kowal, Jim Cavener, Rusty Maynard , Elizabeth Davis

Present on Zoom: Beth Eddy, Mike Eddy, Susan Oehler,

Meeting opened with Silent Worship

Peace and Earth: Steve Livingston

The second agenda item continued from last week's Meeting for Business is a proposal to unite with American Friends Service Committee's statement calling for a cease fire and humanitarian aid

P&E requests a minute on the situation in Gaza. The proposed minute is as follows:

The Asheville Friends Meeting (Quakers) calls on our elected representatives to demand consistent and adequate humanitarian aid for Gaza. We urge them to insist that Israel adhere to international humanitarian and human rights law. We call for an immediate cease-fire to end the wholesale slaughter and destruction in Gaza.

Discussion ensued about the statement and how to disseminate it. Some feel it is the minimum that should be put into the minute. Another member feels we should call on our elected representatives to stop supporting Israel's armed forces. Some asked what will happen with this minute if it is passed, and it was suggested that in addition to it going onto our website, it be sent to local newspapers, and cited if speaking to friends and family, a public entity, or on social media. A member spoke to feeling the proposed minute is too small in scope. Large scale destruction and civilian deaths have already occurred in Gaza and he asked how we can make this more visible to others. He would like the Meeting to acknowledge, in a comprehensive statement, that we must not forget what has happened both recently and in the past to Gaza.

Another member asked why was the word genocide not included in the proposed minute. Steve answered that this is not the first time the Meeting has considered a minute about our concerns about the relationship between the Israelis and Palestinians, and the Meeting was not in unity about using the word genocide. In addition, this proposed minute is very close to the AFSC statement. The AFSC has been involved in the Palestinian situation for 50 years or more, and has provided Quakers with much needed guidance as to how our testimonies instruct in our response.

There was strong support for the cease fire being addressed now and sending the minute to our representatives quickly.

The AFSC statement is below:

Tell Congress to demand immediate humanitarian access for Gaza.

Urge them to insist that Israel adhere to international humanitarian and human rights laws.

Call for a cease fire for Israel to end bombing of Gaza .

A member suggested we address the proposed minute today, and disseminate it to those who need to see it. In the near future she would like to see the Meeting address the issue of the US supplying military aid to Israel, and for us as a Meeting to seek truth in our knowledge of the recent and past history of the Palestinian situation.

Minute #1: The Meeting approved the Minute on the war in Gaza.

The Clerk will send letters with a copy of the Minute to our Federal Senators and Representative. She will also send a copy to the *Mountain Express* and attempt to write something different enough to get our Minute in the *Citizen's Times*.

Meeting was closed with Silent Worship until the way opens for our next Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business in the Twelfth month of 2023.