

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
Asheville Friends Meeting Minutes
Seventh Month 12, 2026
DRAFT

Present in the Meetinghouse: Interim Clerk: Barbara Esther, Recording Clerk: Elliott Jarrett, Steve Livingston, Sarah Jane Thomas, Pat Johnson, Jim Cavener, Valerie Hogstrom, Adrienne Weir, Robin Wells, Richardson Exius, Scottie Utz, Bob Lackey, Diantha Hodges, Bobby Carter, Rylin Hansen, Elizabeth Davis

Present via Zoom: Beth Eddy, Mike Eddy

The meeting opened at 12:40 with silent worship.
Out of the silence, the Interim Clerk read the following:

The perennial justification of Quakerism lies in its energetic assertion that the kingdom of heaven is within us., that we are not made dependent upon any outward organization for our spiritual welfare. Its perennial difficulty lies in the inveterate disposition of human beings to look to each other for spiritual help, in the feebleness of their perception of that divine voice which speaks to each one in a language no other ear can hear, and in the apathy which is content to go through life without the attempt at any true individual communion with God.

Caroline Stephen 1834-1909 *Quaker Strongholds*

Agenda Review

Minute #1: The Agenda was accepted.

Approval of 5th Month Minutes

Minute #2: The 5th Month Minutes were approved.

Announcements

Raw Tools- A successful gun surrender was held at First Baptist Church in late June. Some merchandise was sold as well. Scotty Utz has submitted an article for publication to Friends Journal on this important work. Some of the merchandise may be available at our meeting in the near future.

The **2026 Gathering of Friends General Conference** was held in Burlington, Vermont from July 7 through today, July 12. We look forward to hearing about the Gathering from Friends who were able to attend. <https://www.fgcquaker.org/fgcprograms/the-gathering/>.

Peace Walk- July 25th potluck and hospitality for up to five people may be needed. Please let Robin Wells know if you can offer overnight hospitality to a peace walker. You

can sign up to bring a dish to the potlucks on Saturday night and on Sunday's regular Potluck Sunday.

A reminder that we offer a **Wednesday evening worship opportunity from 4-6 pm** here at the meetinghouse. Drop in as your schedule allows.

Committee Reports

Nominating - Mike Eddy

The Nominating Committee is pleased to bring the nomination of Laura McCullough to serve on the Peace, Earth and Justice Action Committee (PEJA).

Minute #3 The Meeting approved the Nominating Committees proposal for Laura McCullough to become a member of the Peace, Earth, and Justice Action Committee.

Ministry and Counsel - Robin Wells

Membership Request

Ministry & Counsel is happy to report that we have received a request for membership in the Religious Society of Friends. Laura McCullough sent us the following letter:

Dear Clerk,

I'm supposed to be here. That is the most succinct way of saying why I want to become a Quaker.

I attended my first Quaker meeting eight years ago, when a Quaker friend invited me to go with her. I was hooked right away. I have spent years in many churches, with many pastors and priests interpreting for the congregation what they thought I should think, or what the Bible stories represent.

Coming to Quaker meeting, I was given the space to decide for myself what the Bible stories mean to me. Also, the silence gives me space and an opportunity to hear what is being said deep inside of me. The silence allows me to connect with my Maker in a way I did not find elsewhere. I have appreciated my time as an attendee and would like to become a member. I have been very inspired by Asheville Meeting members and look forward to being part of them.

Most sincerely,
Laura McCullough

Ministry & Counsel will form a clearness committee for membership to meet with Laura in the next month and we will report back when clearness has been reached.

Ross Brubeck and the National Peace Walk

On Saturday, July 25th our Meeting will be hosting Ross Brubeck and up to five other people who are walking across our country in the name of peace. We will hold a potluck here at the Meetinghouse on Saturday evening and will get a chance to hear Ross tell us about his pilgrimage. Ross and Friends will also be joining us for meeting for worship the next day.

In addition, we are looking for hospitality for each of our guests on Saturday night. The exact number needed will be better known later this month. We are sending around a sign-up sheet to collect offers of hospitality and find out some important information (e.g., pets in the house, number that can be hosted, possibility of transportation from the Meetinghouse and back again).

Finance Committee- Satchel Loftis

Treasurer's Report - A full update on our income and expenses for 2026, as well as the status of funds being held for specific purposes will be presented in our August Meeting for Business.

Fundraiser Necessary for Much Needed Repairs—Satchel Loftis, Robin Wells

Caring for Our Meeting House

Prepared for: Asheville Friends Meeting, Business Meeting

Prepared by: Finance Committee and House & Grounds Committee

Date: July 12, 2026

Why We Are Bringing This

Our meetinghouse holds our worship, our community, and a good deal of our shared life together. Like any home, it needs ongoing care. Four building projects have come up that ask for our attention now — each one about keeping this place safe and accessible for everyone who gathers here. Taken together, they are bigger than what our reserve funds can comfortably cover, so we are bringing this to the meeting as a proposal: an invitation for all of us to contribute to the upkeep of this place we share.

The Four Projects

Listed here from smallest to largest:

1. **Rewiring the front half of the meetinghouse — \$6,000.** Brings older wiring up to a safe standard.
2. **Staining the back stairs and upper porch — \$4,000.** Protects the wood from rot and keeps these well-used walkways from becoming slippery or unsafe.
3. **Heat pump for cooling, east side of the meetinghouse — \$8,000.** Helps keep the space safe during hot weather, especially for elders and young children.
4. **Driveway/entrance and parking lot repair — \$25,000.** Addresses safety and accessibility for everyone arriving at and moving through the property.

Together, these come to about \$43,000.

Additional Projects

These four are not the whole of our need. Other projects have also been identified, though we do not yet have cost estimates for them:

- Front porch floor
- Front porch ceiling
- Downstairs floor refinishing
- Asbestos Testing in the Basement
- Continued work on lead paint remediation

What We Already Have Set Aside

We do hold a few reserve funds that touch on this kind of work:

- Building Fund — \$2,400
- House & Grounds Emergency Fund — \$1,500
- Meetinghouse Improvement Fund — \$2,000

That is \$5,900 at most. It is tempting to draw on it, but we would rather not — these reserves exist for the unexpected, and we would like to leave them intact, or better yet, keep growing them. So we are proposing to raise the funds for these projects separately, rather than dipping into what we have already set aside.

What We Are Proposing

We see this as a time of rebuilding — for making an investment in the longevity of our meetinghouse and its long-term availability to current and future Friends. We would take on these building projects starting with the smallest and moving toward the largest as funds come in. We would like the meeting's sense on how to shape this: how we invite giving, over what timeframe, and who might help carry the effort forward.

This is not just a repair list. It is a chance for us, as a meeting, to invest in this house's endurance, so it can keep holding us safely for years to come.

Satchel reports that we have approximately \$6,000 available in our meetinghouse Repair and Building Funds. Once we use this, we won't have more until the next fiscal year transfers \$2,400 from our next operating budget into these reserve funds.

One other project in the works has dedicated funding already and that is the new playground that is being funded by the Ellen Frerotte Fund.

We are here to propose to the Meeting that we carry out a fund-raising effort to address these needs. We have already had two families come to us with offers towards this work, but we need significantly more.

A Friend stated that the fundraising will be primarily from families or individuals, not from a fund raising event. That Friend embraced the idea that the meetinghouse has a life of its own and isn't just a building. A Friend shared that it was recommended that the flooring sanding and refinishing be done by October. The general desire to make the house a place where all can attend events in safety, especially those with heat-related health needs and our youngest children was expressed. Friends stated that updating the wiring so that we are able to install a heat pump needs to happen soon.

A Friend suggested that we change the location of the TV to accommodate the stand-alone air conditioner set up by the morning Zen meditation group for cooling the meeting room, because the noise of the unit keeps those on Zoom from hearing anything beyond the sound of the machine. We can also cover the east-facing windows fully with the newly installed blinds to block out more heat and keep the space cool while we are in the space on Sunday mornings. We extend our deep thanks to the House and Grounds and Finance Committees for organizing the long-range look at caring for the meetinghouse.

Minute #4 Friends approved the raising of funds for the Critical Needs of the Meeting House. We look forward to updates on this process.

Other

Fund Development Request - Bob Lackey

Bob suggested that we use the \$538 surplus donations for the April Friends Changemaker Weekend in Washington, DC to create a fund for future FCNL Education.

A Friend expressed that it would be helpful to create some guidelines or boundaries around how the fund is used. This Friend offered to work on writing a more specific proposal and bringing it to the next business meeting. One Friend wondered what committee(s) would oversee this fund, which is generally how a fund is shepherded in this meeting. A Friend clarified that this money would be exclusively for educational opportunities offered by FCNL. One Friend called for us to respect the spirit of the proposal, not trying to decide at this moment on details of the fund's use. That Friend felt drawn to the idea of having a smaller group of folks work with the idea to flesh it out. We are encouraged and have overall support for the fund and welcome the expression of interest from a younger generation in taking an active role in the work of FCNL, which also serves to strengthen the whole community.

Minute #5- We support the formation of the FCNL Education fund and will give representatives of the Scholarship and PEJA committees time to collaborate with Bob Lackey to create a more specific proposal.

An Ad Hoc Welcome Party Committee: We have in mind a welcome to new members, as well as a welcome back to families and individuals from summer adventures, to take

place in late August. A cookout has been mentioned as a possibility. Friends are needed to plan the event.

Minute #6: Rylin Hansen has agreed to organize, with others, a welcoming celebration for new members and returning families.

Please see Rylin if you can assist in the planning of a welcome celebration.

The business meeting closed at 2:06 pm with a period of silent worship to meet again as way opens for our Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business on the 9th day, 8th month, 2026.