

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
Asheville Friends Meeting Minutes
Ninth Month, Thirteen 2026
DRAFT

Present in the Meetinghouse: Interim Clerk: Pat Johnson, Recording Clerk: Elliott Jarrett, Richardson Exius, Matt Utterbacker, Robin Wells, Deanna Hatch, Valerie Hogstrom, Katherine Kowal, Jim Barham, Rylín Hansen, Steve Livingston, Jim Cavener, Barbara Burk, Rusty Maynard, Diantha Hodges, Arjay Ruotolo, Suzanne Junkin-Friedricks

Present via Zoom: Beth Eddy, Mike Eddy, Satchel Loftis

The meeting opened at 12:09 PM with silent worship.

Out of the silence, the Interim Clerk read a definition from *See No Stranger, A Memoir and Manifesto of Revolutionary Love* by Valarie Kaur; p xvi.

“Revolutionary love” is the choice to enter into wonder and labor for *others*, for our *opponents*, and for *ourselves* in order to transform the world around us. It is not a formal code or prescription but an orientation to life that is personal and political and rooted in joy. Loving only ourselves is escapism; loving only our opponents is self-loathing; loving only others is ineffective. All three practices together make love revolutionary, and revolutionary love can only be practiced in community.

Agenda Review

Minute #1: The Agenda was accepted.

Approval of 8th Month Minutes

Minute #2: The 8th Month Minutes were approved as amended.

Announcements:

- Are you wishing you had some quiet worship time in the middle of the week? We have a Midweek Meeting for Worship each Wednesday between 4-6:00 pm at the Asheville Friends Meetinghouse. Drop in as your schedule allows, anytime during 4-6:00 pm.
- We will be welcoming our new members at rise of meeting on September 20th. We will have a shared meal and activities designed to help us get to know each other a little more deeply.
- World Quaker Day Festivities on October 4th
- The children in Meeting want to put on another Fall Festival this year at Rise of Meeting on November 1st. We had a lot of multigenerational fun last year bobbing for donuts, making crafts, and sending ghosts into the Ghost Motel. What fun will the kids stir up this year?
- Thank you note received from Alice Martin-Adkins:

Dear Friends,

Ron's connection with you, especially during the time of his illness and death, offered him much inspiration, comfort and blessing. Our family would like to thank you for taking him in and loving him too. We want to especially thank Suzanne for the many times, including at the gravesite, that she gave us the balm of her hammer dulcimer music. Thanks to Mike and Beth for regular visits and food and to Pat, Robin and Steve for checking in on us and visiting with Ron. Also for the comforting cards and notes and for all who joined with us in celebrating Ron's well lived life on his 80th birthday. I have probably forgotten someone, but please know that your community of faith and love brought Ron much joy and peace and continues to be a comfort to our family.

With gratitude,

Alice, Drew, Myra, Mat, River and Arbor

Committee Reports:

Nominating Report – Mike Eddy

The Nominating Committee is pleased to bring forth the nomination of Valerie Hogstrum for the Ministry and Council Committee. We ask the Meeting to approve this nomination.

Minute #3: Meeting approves Valerie Hogstrom as a Ministry and Council member.

Ministry and Counsel Report-Robin Wells

Membership

Ministry and Counsel is pleased to report that we have two friends that have reached clearness about membership in the Religious Society of Friends. Laura McCullough and Matt Utterback have each been through their clearness process and report that they would like to become members. Ministry and Counsel is in support of these applications and enthusiastically recommends them for membership.

Minute #4: The Meeting approved Laura McCullough's request for membership. We welcome her and look forward to supporting her participation in the life of our Meeting.

Minute #5: The Meeting approved Matt Utterback's request for membership. We welcome him and encourage his continuing contributions in various committees and areas of concern.

A Friend gives appreciation to both Laura and Matt for volunteering and helping with the functions of Meeting. They have both incorporated themselves into the community beautifully.

Peace, Earth and Justice Action Committee–Steve Livingston

Cherokee Tribal Council Presentation

For the better part of two years, the Peace, Earth, and Justice Action Committee has labored over a Statement of Accountability for Quaker Involvement in the Cherokee Boarding School. After consultation with several of our Cherokee associates, the statement that Meeting approved in 6th month 2024 was revised significantly, and reported out to our Cherokee partners who accepted it warmly

and informed us that in due time we would be asked to appear before the Tribal Council and read it into the record of the Tribe.

That time came near the end of last month, when we learned that they were expecting us at the next Reports to Tribal Council meeting, on Sep 1. But then, about a week before the meeting, we heard from Amber Ledford, Cultural Outreach Coordinator at the Qualla Boundary Public Library and a member of the Cherokee Boarding School Research Coalition. The Coalition had several questions and concerns about our statement as submitted, she said, and they asked that we either undertake substantive changes to the Statement, or revert to our original draft, or consider a new draft prepared by one of their members. We felt unable to arrive at the right way forward in the brief time remaining before the meeting, and asked that our presentation be postponed. But when the agenda came out the day before the meeting, we were on it.

Pat Johnson and Steve Livingston came to the meeting prepared to tell the Council that out of our sense of integrity we couldn't rightly offer a Statement until we had properly addressed the Coalition's questions and concerns. But just as Pat began to speak, one Council member with whom we have a strong relationship interrupted and for several minutes spoke to Council about the sincerity of our efforts, describing us as good allies working from our hearts and not for show. A second Council member with whom we also have a relationship then spoke in a similar supportive way. In the end, the Council accepted our decision readily.

The Peace, Earth, and Justice Action Committee will keep Meeting informed as we continue our work on the Statement to answer the questions and concerns raised by the Boarding School Research Coalition and reach agreement with all of our Cherokee partners.

Friends expressed a desire to hear what the feedback entailed.

Amber Ledford's remarks below:

We ask that the following points be addressed:

- * Clarify the language in the Therefore section regarding rejecting oppressive attitudes while acknowledging that they are still carried today.
- * Clarify the circumstances surrounding the three girls who drowned in the Oconaluftee River and the responsibility being acknowledged.
- * Explain how the Center for Native Health was selected to receive the Indigenous People's Fund and how those funds will be used.
- * Provide more detail about plans for education and community learning around boarding school history and trauma.
- * Clarify plans for commemorating the children who died and how Cherokee community members will be involved.
- * Include a commitment to archival access, including providing access to or copies of relevant Cherokee records for institutions such as the Museum of the Cherokee People, Junaluska Museum, and Qualla Boundary Public Library.
- * Remove contractions to maintain the formal tone of the acknowledgment.

We appreciate the work that has gone into this process and the willingness to engage with our feedback. We feel strongly that the final acknowledgment should be clear, substantive, and meaningful, while accurately reflecting the history and the accountability being expressed.

A Friend thanks Steve and Pat for making such a personal connection and representing our Meeting in this developing relationship.

A Friend expressed that as she was listening she made a realization that we are not creating a treaty. That we are building a relationship that will grow, change, and deepen in ways that we don't even know yet.

Proposed Minute #6: The Meeting accepted the PEJA Report. The Meeting thanks PEJA for the work of this report. We acknowledge the consistent effort, courage, and humility to accept feedback and continue to do this work.

Finance Report—Satchel Loftis

Operating Funds report will be given at the October Business Meeting.

Reserve Funds Balances: [Restricted Fund Balances as of 2026-08-31](#)

A Friend points out that the FCNL fund is not present. FCNL fund has been added.

Proposed Minute #7: Meeting accepted the Finance Reports with thanks to Satchel.

Building & Grounds Reserve Fund–Robin Wells

We want to thank everyone who has come forward with contributions to our new Building & Grounds Reserve Fund. We are making progress and will be able to begin our rewiring project soon. We will also be able to begin cleaning and sealing the back stairs and porch, which are way overdue for this work. We have more work to do on the Meetinghouse and grounds and we encourage Friends to consider contributing to this fund. No contribution is too small. This investment put into our Meetinghouse helps guarantee a place for Quakers to gather in the years to come. Please note that this fund is separate from our operating budget, and the money put into it is held from year to year, making it available for larger projects.

A Friend wonders if we will be putting in a heat pump as well so that we can have AC and Heat. This will cut our carbon footprint in the Winter.

Minute #8: The Meeting accepted the Building and Grounds Reserve Fund Report.

The Business Meeting closed at 1PM with a period of silent worship to meet again as way opens for our Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business on the Eleventh day, Tenth Month, 2026.