

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Administrative Council
Saturday, October 21, 2017
Approved Minutes

Members present: Harry Bryans, Suzanne Day, Bruce Haines (clerk), Linda Lotz (co-recording clerk), Richard Morse (co-recording clerk taking minutes today), tonya thames taylor (by phone), Andrew Anderson, Penny Colgan-Davis. **Regrets:** Julian Brelsford, Terri Whiteford, Roy Zatcoff, and Ventina Hershey. **Staff present:** Christie Duncan-Tessmer and Linell McCurry.

We began with Worship at 10 AM.

1. The Agenda was discussed and approved.
2. The minutes for September 16, 2017 meeting were approved with the correction that Christie Duncan-Tessmer was not present.
3. The Conflict of Interest Forms for Council Members were distributed earlier via email. Many were turned in signed during the meeting today. These are for this fiscal year. The form is to be executed every year. The recommendation was to err on the side of more information. This led one member to modify his form to add membership on AFSC governing committees. It was observed that the language on inclusion of family members is more ambiguous than necessary and needs some tightening. This concern was referred to the Governance Committee. It was also suggested that a preamble explaining what should be included in less legalistic language with examples would be helpful. Those not present today should sign a print out of the PDF form and send to PYM for filing.
4. General Secretary's Report to the Council: Her written report was sent electronically while we met. She discussed the religious context of many interactions in her recent mid-east trip. She noted the complexities of communicating about a trip via social media.

Annual Fund: The fiscal year just ended had the Annual Fund total higher than every year since 2013. This happened in spite of the death of one large donor. New fundraising methods were used, as well as many personal hand-written messages. Twenty percent of the donors this year had not given in the previous year and 60% gave more than last year. The data base transition is not complete which means that analysis of the results has been more time consuming.

Staffing changes: Many of the seven PYM strategic directions are about *connections*. PYM is the "interwovenness" of the monthly meetings, quarterly meetings and other PYM groups. The job of PYM staff is to maintain that fabric. Collaboratives, Sprints, and Resource Friends are forming and evolving. An early example is in organized social justice interests. Other Resource Friends in other areas are being recruited such as first day school teachers, teachers in Quaker schools etc. Connection of the PYM institution to individuals and meetings is happening vertically between monthly meetings and PYM as well as horizontally between monthly meetings. Bridge Contacts are coming soon to further catalyze this. Advancement and relationship activities are being brought together in one department within the staff. The new position of Associate General Secretary for Advancement (fundraising, donor engagement) and Relationships (monthly and quarterly meetings as well as individual engagement) is about to be advertised. Program and Religious Life is the existing Associate Secretary position. Collaboration between these two associate level positions will be important.

It was noted by Council members that quarterly meetings were barely mentioned in this discussion. The heterogeneity of functionality among quarters needs to be addressed at some time in the future. Some quarters are devoid of a clerk while others are very active, for example the recent takeover of Burlington Meeting House by Burlington Quarter. Might we explore the impact of the cessation of PYM support for quarter coordinators several years ago and assess ways to better integrate quarters into overall PYM activities?

5. Finance Committee Finance Committee reported that Friends Fiduciary inquired about the PYM administrative fee charged on four of its trust funds. The funds differ from other restricted funds in that PYM has no beneficial interest in them. Finance Committee proposed to continue the conversation with a goal of rationalizing these fees and PYM's involvement with these funds. Andrew Anderson and Christie Duncan-Tessmer will report back to Finance and AC. The AC approved.
6. Revision of Process for Approval of Minutes from PYM Sessions: Rather than hearing full minutes at end of a business session we now hear only the minutes of action. Then the committee on minutes reviews the full minutes. This experiment is not working well. We will try a new process. The problem of waiting for some presenters to review a minute draft has created large lag time to approval. Britain YM recording clerk reads a minute after each item of business. Some more technical agenda items like Nominating and budget could have minutes written in advance. See Damon Hickey's book on the joys of being recording clerk. It was suggested a sprint be appointed to work on this further. Part of this is the challenge of finding recording clerks and training them. A preamble before the minute is read to set the ground rules may be part of the invitation to approve the minutes. The sprint should include some previous PYM clerks as well as some recording clerks. It would report at March Sessions. Suzanne Day is willing to convene this Sprint. Terry Whiteford was also suggested as a member. Linell will provide staff participation. A report on progress in forming this sprint was requested for the next AC meeting.
7. Multicultural audit Steering Committee: Penny reported that 17 "yes" and 5 "no" responses to invitations have been received so far. Five people have not responded. The goal is to appoint about 20 people. No clerk or assistant clerk have been found yet. Nominating Council is working on that.
8. Brief Feedback from, and discussion about, Annual Sessions: The spirit of the July Session was much improved in the search for unity on questions compared to previous years. Business sessions ended on a better tone than expected from immediate past experience and were more productive. "There was less heat in the room but it was still hot around the edges."

It was noted that the new structure of PYM confers the same decision making authority of a "Session" whether it is the one in the Summer, Spring or Fall. The use of the term "Annual Sessions" may imply a difference in authority for that particular Session that does not actually exist.

9. Discussion of committee descriptions from the Governance Committee:
 - a. Personnel Committee (PC): Linda Lotz & Paula Cell are the co-clerks. The requirement that all actions must now come to AC for approval seems daunting and is a change from past expectations. New policies may need ratification from AC but other items about cost of

- living adjustments etc. should go directly to the Finance Committee. Council asked for release of this draft to the PC for comments with the intention to discuss it further at a future AC meeting. Edits and updates to the Employee Handbook by HR staff is concluded. It will next be reviewed by staff and then it goes to the Personnel Committee. The grievance policy is being fast-tracked for approval ahead of the Employee Handbook.
- b. Granting Committee (GC): Council asked that the description for the GC be returned to Governance for further work with similar concerns as those expressed about the PC description, particularly about GC being advisory to AC. Again, that is somewhat different from the current process.
 - c. Property Committee: Duty number 6 about consultation and liaison may be a good thing to add to the duties of the other two committees. Council APPROVED this document as presented.
10. General Secretary Oversight and Evaluation Committee: Two phone meetings have been held. The committee consists of Linda Lotz, Bruce Haines, David Jones, Penny Colgan-Davis, and Jada Jackson. Ewuare Osayande, Chief Diversity Officer at AFSC, has been suggested as a consultant. AC and Quaker Life Council will be consulted as the committee continues its work.

Closing Worship was at 12:55 PM.