

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Administrative Council
Saturday, November 19, 2016
Approved Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT: Andrew Anderson (Interim Treasurer), Julian Brelsford (by phone), Harry Bryans, Penny Colgan-Davis (ex-officio, PYM Clerk), Suzanne Day, Bruce Haines (clerk), Ventina Hershey, Linda Lotz, Fred Melroy, Richard Morse, Tom Peterson, tonya thames taylor and Roy Zatcoff (by phone).

STAFF PRESENT: Christie Duncan-Tessmer (Ex Officio) and Linell McCurry.

REGRETS: Joyce Moore.

1. **Opening Worship** - The Meeting opened in worship.
2. **Welcome tonya thames taylor and Introductions**—Bruce introduced tonya thames taylor from Fallowfield Monthly Meeting as a new member of the Council. As a novel and interesting way to introduce tonya, Bruce suggested all Council Members and Staff state their name and Meeting as well as an interesting fact about themselves that those at the Council would not know. Everyone agreed this was productive and interesting in finding out more about each person.
3. **Review and Approval Agenda and Minutes**—The minutes of the October 15, 2016, meeting were **Approved** with a few minor changes.
4. **Opening reflections**—Bruce opened by observing that we should “remain mindful that we are mostly white.” We need to give special attention to involve Friends of Color on the various Councils and committees. He noted that AFSC has had training on undoing racism and it was very productive and comprehensive. It is planned that something similar would take part with both the Admin and Quaker Life Councils.
5. **Reflections on Fall Continuing Sessions**—Time was spent discussing the slides that Ron Ploeg had presented showing both a decrease in the number of donations and the total number of donations. It was agreed that greater cultivation of membership in the Quaker Community was needed. Work needs to be done to welcome new donors into support of PYM. The pool of leadership donors on which it has relied in recent years is aging out.

Discussion turned to the disappointingly low turnout at Fall Sessions and the reasons for it. Penny and Christie shared some feedback that came from those in attendance based on a survey sent out and personal feedback. Some responses were: many expected only ministry about Racism, Communication not very good, PYM should be doing more outreach, Interim Meeting missed and

what is the decision-making capability of Session? One Council member said that we need to rely on “Quakerism 101 in that affirmation does not just happen, it comes from the spirit.” All seemed to agree there is a role for us in being faithful. There was a lengthy discussion on the overall topic. There will be more on this subject at a future meeting and decision making will be handled later in today’s agenda. All Council Members agreed that in the future the Sessions meeting venue should be moved to the Meeting House, if at Westtown School, so Friends are not so spread out.

- 6. General Secretary’s Report**—Christie handed out full detailed copies of her report to those present and sent to all Council Members via e-mail. She went on to cover highlights with the headline “Living One Truth” paying attention to justice. She announced the formation of two sprints: First for Queries -- saying hello to folks and practicing how to live our truth, the Second concerning resources and how to respond and having folks “Quaker Up”.

She also spoke about a new campaign on communication to the community which focuses on support without being political. This is leading but not recruiting, no proselytizing. This will be paid for out of strategic reserve funds.

Christie also announced the 2017 employee healthcare program that is offered to employees. It is three tiered with the first level (silver) being free to the employee with more enhanced (gold and platinum) levels requiring contributions from employees which are based on salary levels. This is an improvement over the one plan now offered. In addition, Christie also mentioned that she is now working on delegating more to the Assistant Secretaries.

- 7. Formation of Development Committee**—Christie and Bruce reported that a hands-on development group was being put together and they were looking for the best ways to structure the group. Council Members were asked for names of folks that might be interested in serving and a few names were suggested. The target start date is January 2017 and a charge will be written in the next month.
- 8. Granting Committee Nominating Sprint, Possible Candidates**—Richard reported that the Sprint had not yet met but a brief conference call is planned. They are still looking for candidates if anyone has suggestions.
- 9. Governance Committee**—Bruce reported on a concern that was raised at Continuing Sessions about the authority of the PYM body at Continuing Sessions. Upon review the Council does not believe there is an issue, but all agreed that the provisions of the revised Faith and Practice which is pending adoption is clearer in showing that the PYM body always has authority any time it meets in session, whether annual or continuing. For now, approval of Andrew as Treasurer at the November Continuing Sessions will remain approval of “Interim Treasurer,” until it can be brought up again at the March Continuing Sessions. There was discussion and agreement that the Council does have authority to

provide interpretation on this topic, and that the yearly meeting's adoption of the Long-Range Plan, which calls for continuing sessions to have authority, also provides grounding for the appointment of the Treasurer without an "Interim" limitation, pending final approval of language to that effect in Faith and Practice.

Bruce went on to discuss updates on Committees and Sprints and the need to develop a calendar to set meetings and updates to the Admin Council.

10. Property Committee Update on Millington Burial Grounds—Linell reported for the Property Committee that she had visited the Burial Ground in Millington, Maryland, and met with the town council at their November meeting. The town council may be interested in turning the small burial ground into an historical site, a park for walking, resting and meditating. The burial ground had belonged to Head of Chester Preparative Meeting, which was established when the town was founded in 1789 and laid down in 1847. Southern Quarter had struggled to maintain the site since the oversight monthly meeting was laid down in 1928. Ownership passed to PYM in 2006. Council **Agreed** that this would be an appropriate direction and returned the matter to the Property Committee for continued discernment and potential recommendation. Linell relayed a request from the town council for PYM to repair a fence and refurbish an area with headstones. Council **Approved** Linell taking this to the Finance Committee for funding from the Capital Reserve Fund.

11. Closing Worship—The meeting closed with Worship at 12:45.

Respectfully Submitted
Fred Melroy, Co Recording Clerk